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CAMERON AT AIRSMOSS

p 516

LAYS

OF THE

KIRK AND COVENANT.

BY

Mrs. A. Stuart Menteath.

"THERE IS ANOTHER KING, ONE JESUS."—ACTS XVII. 7.

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CARTER & BROTHERS,
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1852.

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"God hath laid engagements upon Scotland; we are tyed by Covenants to religion and reformation. Those that were then unborn, are yet engaged; and it passeth the power of all the magistrates under heaven, to absolve from the oath of God."

Dying Testimony of the Marquis of Argyle.

"It is our Lord's wisdom, that his Kirk should ever hing by a thread, and yet the thread breaketh not, being hanged upon Him who is the sure nail in David's house,* upon whom all the vessels, great and small, do hang, and the nail (God be thanked) neither crooketh nor can be broken."

Rutherford's Letters.

* Isaiah xxii. 23.

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INTRODUCTION.

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Introduction.

"Till doomsday shall come, they shall never see the Kirk of Scotland and our Covenant burnt to ashes; or, if it should be thrown in the fire, yet it cannot be so burnt or buried as not to have a resurrection."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

SCOTLAND! hallowed in thy story—
Who would trace thine annals right—
One peculiar page of glory,
Ever brightens on his sight!
Not the honors—far descended—
Of thine ancient hero kings—
Not thy bulwarks—blood defended—
These are but thy meaner things!

True—the pulse exulting flutters—
  True—our souls within us burn—
Trumpet names as Freedom utters,
  Wallace—Bruce—and Bannockburn!
But a holier joy subdues us,
  Tracing, while our heartstrings thrill,
How the Saviour deigned to choose us—
  In his cause to suffer still!
Honored be the patriot story!
  Well may Scottish hearts beat high—
Yet a far-excelling glory,
  Glads the heaven-anointed eye—
Heritage, unbought—unpriced—
Rich in the reproach of Christ!

Early—early, on our mountains,
  Presage of a glorious day,

Pure, as from its native fountains,
  Faintly broke the Gospel ray.
Storm and cloud the pathway covers,
  By our rude forefathers trod—
Yet that dawning brightness hovers,
  Where St. Columb walked with God:[1]
Ever broadening—ever welling—
  From Iona's holy home
Poured the radiance—sin-dispelling—
  Till it met the fogs of Rome!
Dark eclipse the earth then shrouded,
  Lurid phantasms filled the air—
But the glorious sun, though clouded,[2]
  Shorn, and beamless, *still was there!*
Witness—many a faint forewarning,
  Struggling through the night of crime—
Prescient of a second dawning—
  Of the Gospel's noonday prime.

Streaks, that like the northern light,
Shoot in promise up the night!

Lo! it comes! the mist hath risen—
Martyr pyres the gloom dispel;
Scotland wakes, and bursts her prison,
Lighted by the flames of hell!
Rome hath wrought her own undoing—
Rome infatuate! Rome accurst!
All her fabric—one vast ruin—
Crumbles 'neath the thunderburst!
Fierce the strife, and fierce the slaughter—
Blood her rubbish moistens o'er—
Even till error's loveliest daughter,
Falls upon a hostile shore!
Poor forfeit to the fatal band,[3]
Once lightly sealed with careless hand!

Twice crowned Queen—thrice wedded wife—
More regal in her death than life!

Now the infant Church hath quiet—
Surely now her toils may cease!
O'er the wild waves' rout and riot
Broods the halcyon wing of peace!
Rome hath wrought her own undoing!
Papal fires no longer blaze!
Ah! but forth the mighty ruin,
What new portents mar our gaze!
Sin, the fiend! is hydra-headed—
Far the Church's promised rest—
Avarice, with ambition wedded,
Points new weapons at her breast!
Brief her Murray's true upholding[4]—
Nor tears nor prayers protract its span;

And the helm falls from his holding,
  Who never feared the face of man !*
While myriad mischiefs swarming spring,
From minions of a minion King !

Ah ! the eye is sick with seeing—
  Ah ! the heart is faint with fear—
Clouds athwart the horizon fleeing—
  Harbingers of tempest near !
God hath laid to sleep his chosen—
  Who the mighty shall withstand ?
And the tide of faith seems frozen,
  In the winter of the land !
For a space it darkens—darkens—
  Hope and promise in the tomb !
But the Lord looks down, and hearkens—
  Sobs of prayer amid the gloom !

* John Knox.

"Nay, my people—not forsaken,
Though afflicted sore thou art—
Of my strength thy hold is taken—
Thy fresh springs are in my heart!
From the deep vault of the prison—
From the lone isle of the sea—
From thy banished ones hath risen,
An accepted voice to me!
Chosen in affliction's waters—
Chosen 'neath the oppressor's rod—
I have sealed thy sons and daughters,
In a covenant with God!
Pass thou on—a sign and wonder—
As my nation was of yore—
In the secret place of thunder
I have laid thy help in store!
Quit thy hold of earthly favor,
Touch not the accursed thing!—

Monarchs *must* abhor thy savor,
  While they set at naught thy King!
Part not—halve not thine allegiance,
  Till I come to claim mine own;
In the woe of thine obedience,
  Bear my Cross—and guard my Crown—
All its thorns in thy true sight,
Transfigured into beams of light!"

Thus, a witness to the Churches,
  Scotland's Church hath ever been—
Carnal men, with vain researches,
  Musing what the sign may mean!
Like her Master—poor and lowly,
  Seeking naught of price below—
All she claims, with freedom holy,
  Still about His work to go;

Covèting nor wealth, nor station—
  Terrible to nought but sin—
Mean in outward estimation,
  She is glorious within!
Trace her unmolested going—
  Cæsar finds observance meet;—
Living waters round her flowing,
  Oh, how beautiful her feet!
Hope, o'er those broad waters gliding,
  Fast pursues the waning night—
And the home of her abiding,
  Gathers still, and radiates light!
Strange! that in her pathway ever,
  Strifes and oppositions spring;—
Nay! she sows beside the river,
  And her shout is of a King!

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Since from Herod's couch the slumber,
Parted at the wise men's word—
Kings and rulers without number,
Band themselves against the Lord!
Tolls a death-knell through their riot—
Shakes a terror 'neath their scorn—
And they seek, with vain disquiet,
For the Babe in Bethlehem born!
Hating still, in deadliest measure,
Who that rising sceptre own—
Marring all their pomp and pleasure,
With the shadow of a throne!
True! they kneel with feigned behavior,
Myrrh and frankincense will bring;
Priest and Prophet own the Saviour—
But—they crucify the King!
Wouldst thou hail an earthly Master,
Then the world would love its own!

Grasp thy banner-truth the faster—
  See that no man take thy crown!

Hope thou not, then, earth's alliance—
  Take thy stand beside the Cross;—
Fear, lest by unblest compliance,
  Thou transmute thy gold to dross!
Steadfast in thy meek endurance,
  Prophesy in sackcloth on—
Hast thou not the pledged assurance,
  Kings one day shall kiss the Son!
Oft thy foes may triumph o'er thee,
  Tread thy carcass in the street,
Sing aloud the hate they bore thee—
  Thou shalt stand upon thy feet!
Life through all thy veins returning,
  In the sight of those who doomed—

And the Bush, for ever burning,
Never—never—be consumed!

Now unto the hill-tops get thee—
Whence the sunrise we descry—
Nightly on thy watchtower set thee,
For His coming draweth nigh!
Tell the nations of the glory,
Through the blackness we discern—
Sound a trumpet with the story,
Of the King who shall return!
Call to Judah in her blindness—
Bid benighted Israel hear—
Drop the word of truth and kindness,
On the heathen's palsied ear!
Trim thy lamp—the night-hours cheering—
Wash thy robes from every stain—

Watch, to hail the glad appearing,
  Of the Bridegroom and his train!
Haste! thy coming Lord to greet—
Cast thy crown before his feet;—
Only, may his quest for thee,
Find thee—what he made thee—Free!

Notes to the Introduction.

Note 1.

Yet that dawning brightness hovers—
Where St. Columb walked with God!

It is curious to observe, that more than one of the Churches, lately erected by the *extreme* section of the Tractarian party, have been dedicated to the "Presbyter-Abbott" of Iona. The reason of this it is not easy to discover; for it is certain, that from first to last, nothing but antagonism subsisted between the Culdees, wherever located, and the "Mother Church of Rome," with which our Tractarians claim kindred so tenderly, and from which they deduce their orders and apostolical succession so exultingly. Both in doctrine and in discipline there was irreconcilable discrepancy. The Culdees rejected the popish tenets of auricular confession, and authoritative absolution; teaching the people to confess their sins to God only, and believing that He alone could forgive them. They opposed the belief of

the real presence in the Sacrament of the Supper—denounced as idolatrous the worship of saints, angels, and relics—and were so sensitive, in particular, on the score of idolatry, that they would not permit the naming of their churches after any angel or saint! They admitted neither prayers *to*, nor prayers *for* the dead—strenuously denied the popish dogma concerning works of supererogation—administered the rite of baptism with any water that might be conveniently at hand—knowing nothing of the "consecrated chrism" of the Romanists—and altogether, in their doctrines and form of church government, so nearly resembled the Presbyterians of later times, that their differences belong rather to the early age in which they flourished, than to any essential variation in either the substance or the form of their faith;—and we may recognize them affectionately as *our* ancestors, by their strong family likeness to ourselves—notwithstanding the quaint habits in which they are vested, and the gulf of ages that intervenes between their day and our own!

Note 2.

But the glorious sun, though clouded,
Shorn, and beamless, *still was there!*

From the year 1297, when the Culdees of St. Andrews made their last open attempt to resist the usurpations and oppressions of Rome, to the burning of Patrick Hamilton in 1528, may be considered as the darkest period of Scottish Church history. But even during this dreary season, there were many indications that the light of Iona was not extinguished, but only hidden under a bushel for a while, till the candlestick was prepared, on which it was once more to shine forth with brighter effulgence than ever. It may be sufficient merely to recall the several martyrdoms of Resby the Englishman, and Craw the Bohemian, who, though foreigners themselves, had evidently received countenance and kindly entertainment from kindred spirits in Scotland—and the memorable trial of the Lollards of Kyle, before James IV. in 1494, the very amusing details of which may be found in Knox's History.

Note 3.

Poor forfeit to the fatal band, &c.

Alluding to the infamous League of Bayonne, the egg from which the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was hatched, and to which Mary Queen of Scots was a consenting party! Assuredly, if, as Lord Lindsay confidently informs us (in his Lives of the Lindsays), "her bosom was the fountain of all good impulses," the miracle was in her accomplished, of a "fountain sending forth at the same place sweet water and bitter;" and we must be permitted, though with regret (for the spell of her beauty and misfortune is not lightly broken), rather to concur in the opinion of John Knox when he writes to Cecil, "I wold be glad to be deceaved; but I fear I shall not. In communication with her, I espyed such craft as I have not found in such aige." It is painful to find a writer, usually so candid, and always so kindly, as Lord Lindsay, denouncing even the "Good Regent" of Scotland's holiest memories, as "the cold and perfidious Moray," in the eagerness of his onslaught upon all who arrested the "Rose of Scotland" in her career of folly, or strove to preserve their country from the consequences of her crimes; but "*there is* a talisman in that word Mary," and when we find sober historians, metamorphosed into sentimental apologists for sin, falling rabidly upon the great Reformer,

Knox, because he resisted the tears with which a passionate and self-willed woman endeavored to force the approval his conscience could not yield, of that very marriage she was herself to weary of, so fatally and so soon, we have the less cause to wonder at the chivalrous eagerness with which "the light Lindsay" buckles on his armor, to do his devoir as good knight and true in her defence!

It may be permitted, in conclusion, to quote a few lines from an admirable article in the *North British Review* (November 1845), on "Mary Stuart and her Times," which we consider highly apposite to the subject:—"Had Mary perished at Langside, when her banner dragged the dust never again to reappear, she would not perhaps have excited so lasting a sympathy for her misfortunes. But her nineteen years of imprisonment, and her tragic death, met with the brave heroism of her race, have created for her defence a morality, that neither Plato nor the Bible owns!"

There can be no doubt, that the catastrophe of Mary's sad fate, was mainly owing to her being the willing centre of popish intrigue in England—the horrors that it had produced, having utterly failed to disgust her with the league, to which she had so long before affixed her name. And little as we can sympathize with, or excuse, the miserable feline trifling with which Elizabeth coquetted away, first the liberty, and then the life of her victim, we cannot but feel that it was the ability, and not the inclination of the rival Queens to destroy each other, that differed so widely. When Elizabeth signed the death-warrant of Fotheringay,

the strong instinct of self-preservation (in part at least) impelled her pen!

Note 4.

Brief her Murray's true upholding—
Nor tears nor prayers protract its span.

In January, 1570, Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, as the emissary of his clan, accomplished the cold-blooded assassination of the good Regent Murray, before he had held the reins of government three years; and thus the hopes of his reviving country were blasted by a wretch on whom he had just before bestowed his forfeit life. "The story so often retailed," says the younger Dr. M'Crie, in a note to his most graphic Sketches, "of Regent Murray's cruelty to Hamilton's wife, has been found out to be a complete forgery, resting solely on the authority of Crawfurd's Memoirs, a book which has been proved to be a tissue of fabrications from beginning to end. Murray's assassination was the result of a plot, in which the lairds of Ferniherst and Buccleuch had a chief share. One of their followers, on the day after the murder, and before it could be known on the

Borders, said, in reply to another who threatened him with the Regent's displeasure, 'Tush, the Regent is cauld as the bit in my horse's mouth.'"

John Knox did not long survive the death of his friend. Grief for his loss preyed upon his health and spirits. In the October following he was stricken with apoplexy—a solemn warning that the tabernacle was about to be taken down; and in November, 1572, he was laid in his grave—the Regent Morton pronouncing over it these memorable words, "There lies he who never feared the face of man."

PATRICK HAMILTON.

PATRICK HAMILTON IN FLAMES

p. 31

Patrick Hamilton,

The Protomartyr of Scotland—(Born 1504—Martyred 1528.)

The story of Patrick Hamilton, the first who suffered death in Scotland for the cause of the Reformation, is, in all its circumstances, one of the most touching recorded in the blood-stained annals of persecution. The son of Sir Patrick Hamilton of Kincavil, he was doubly allied to royalty. Endowed in childhood with the rich Abbacy of Ferne; and tempted by the dominant superstition with the prospect of all her honors, life opened upon him, clothed in manifold allurements. His bright talents, and peculiarly gentle and inoffensive disposition, strongly inclined him to a life of lettered ease and retirement, perfectly compatible with the highest ecclesiastical dignities; but, like the young man in the Gospel, he came to Jesus; not like him to go away again sor-

rowful, "because he had great possessions:"—but to count all things as loss "for the excellency of the knowledge of that blessed name;" and to offer himself, a most willing sacrifice, on the altar of his country's regeneration.

After three years spent on the Continent (then the focus of light, as now, alas! the centre of darkness), in the enjoyment of the friendship and instructions of the leading Reformers, especially of Francis Lambert at his College of Marburg, his Scottish heart, yearning over his benighted countrymen, drew him home; and he returned in spite of the dangers which inevitably threatened him; and of which his friends seem to have given him earnest and affectionate warning. With a single attendant, he landed in Scotland;—for a brief period, enjoyed the privilege of giving his public testimony to the truth; and then, falling, as it appears, into a snare of the Beatons* (for whose craft his simple upright nature was no match), he suffered them to decoy him to their stronghold of St. Andrews, under pretext of a free conference, and there, seized by their treachery, and subjected to a mock trial, he was burned to death in front of the College of St. Salvador, on the last day of February, 1528, when only in the twenty-fourth year of his age.

Lest the king (James V.) should interfere to save the life of so near a relation, he had been artfully persuaded by the

* James, the celebrated Archbishop of St. Andrews, and David, his nephew and successor, the yet more celebrated Cardinal.

priests to undertake a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Dothess, or Duthack, in Ross-shire, and having thus got him out of the way, the Beatons hastened the execution of their inhuman purpose; being, however, so anxious to secure an apparent sanction to their proceedings, that they compelled, among others, the young Earl of Cassilis, a child of thirteen years of age, to sign the warrant which sent the martyr to the stake! But "the flames in which he expired," says Pinkerton, "were, in the course of one generation, to enlighten all Scotland, and to consume with avenging fury the Catholic superstition, the Papal power, and the Prelacy itself!".

THE King is away to St. Dothess' shrine—
On a pilgrimage he's gone;—
He hath left the Beatons place and power
And they'll burn young Hamilton!

Oh! young Hamilton—from beyond the sea
He hath strange new doctrines brought;—
And our Father the Pope says,—such heretics
Are easier burned than taught!

He hath preachëd once—he hath preachëd twice,
And the people were fain to hear:—
For, as rain on the new-mown grass, his voice
Comes down on the charmëd ear!

And he tells us not—as our begging friars,
Of indulgence the price of gold;—
But he speaks of a pardon, as sunlight free,
That can neither be bought nor sold!

And he tells us not—of our Ladye's grace,
By aves and penance won;—
But he points the way to the Father's heart,
Through the shed blood of the Son!—

No crucifix in his hand he waves—
Nor relic nor chaplet wears;—
And he spends no worship on dead men's bones,
No faith upon dead men's prayers!—

All intercessors 'twixt earth and heaven,
Save Jesus—God's only One—
He would scatter, as marsh-raised mists are driven
From the path of the glorious sun.

And ever he reads in the Book of God,
As his very breath it were—
And, oh! if his doctrine be heresy,
'Tis strange he should find it there!

And ever some burthened souls and poor,
Avouch that his words are sooth!
And, oh! if his doctrine be heresy,
Dear Lord! that it were but truth!—

—They have lured him on to St. Andrew's town,
With their cunning words and fair;—
In the dead of the night, when good men sleep,
They have seized and bound him there!

—James Beaton he sits on his throne of state,
And David he sits beside;—
Was never a bloodier Prelate yet,
Trained on by a bloodier guide!

And knights and nobles are all around—
This world with its braverie;
It pranked not thus in the path of Him,
Whose throne was the cursed tree!

And young Hamilton stands in his light of youth,
With his calm and holy brow;
And it seems as the Father's name of love
Were beaming from it now!

But once he spake as his doom they signed,
When Cassilis' young Earl drew near;
"God charge not my blood on thy soul, poor child—
And forgive who brought thee here!"

—They have hasted down by the College wall,—
With fagots they pile the sod;—
But there are sore hearts for the blood of kings—
Sore hearts for the truth of God!

And many are gazing in silent awe,
With thoughts that they may not speak;—
As men who awaken to feel a chain,
Erewhile they must die or break!

The friars are mustered—white, grey, and brown—
A motley, exulting band;—
But all eyes are turned on one Black Friar,[1]
Who strides at the Martyr's hand—

"Convert!" "Convert!" cried the Black Friar,
"And sue for our Ladye's grace!"—
But ever the light of that holy brow,
Chased the life-blood from his face!—

Yet he set as a stone his cold grey eye,
And he fixed his cold white face;—
And louder he clamored—"Convert!" "Convert!"
"And sue for our Ladye's grace!"—

—One moment that death procession paused—
For a cry rose hoarse and wild—
As an old man burst through the serried crowd,
And wept like an orphaned child!

Full gently his hand did the martyr lay,
On that old man's hoary brow—
"Good friend, thou didst never forsake me yet,
And thou hast not failed me now!"

—"These weeds in the fire will not profit me—
But thee they may profit still;
And weep not so sore for thy master's doom—
He but bears his Master's will!

"But remember thou—and remember all—
Good countrymen, standing near—
Christ Jesus our Lord will deny in heaven
Who shall shrink to own him here!—

"And sorrow no more for the young life quenched,
At a priestly tyrant's nod—
No hurt is theirs in the sevenfold fire,
Who walk with the Son of God!"

Still "Convert!" "Convert!" roared the Black Friar,
As they bound him to the stake;
But he met a glance from the Martyr's eye—
And it made the Black Friar shake!

"Thou evil man! in thy heart of hearts—
Thou art witnessing a lie—
To me hast thou owned, that for God's good truth—
I am called this day to die!

"To His judgment-seat—I appeal thee now,—
Thy doom at His hand to take!"
There fell a mist on the Black Friar,
And he staggered from the stake!

The dry wood crackled—the flame rose high—
One groan from the breathless crowd;
But a voice came forth from the mantling fire,[2]
As a trumpet, clear and loud!

"How long, O my God! shall this darkness brood?
How long wilt Thou stay Thine hand?—
Now gather my soul to its rest with Thee—
And shine on my native land!"

As the flame rose higher, the daylight paled,
With a wan and sickly light;
And an old man sat by the blackened sod—
Alone—in the dews of night!

But a few brief vigils had barely flown,
  Since that martyr passed to heaven;—
When the Black Friar died a despairing man,
  His brain all frenzy-riven!

And even amid his dark-stoled feres
  Did the whispered word pass on;—
"He is gone, to meet at the bar of God—
  With Patrick Hamilton!"

And one who dared mutter a biting gibe
  In the Primate's ear—quoth he,
"When ye next shall burn, my good lord, I pray,
  In a deep vault let it be!

"For it seemeth as if the clouds of heaven,
  Dropped heresy with their dew;
And the smoke of young Patrick Hamilton,
  Hath infected where'er it blew!"

1847.

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Notes to Patrick Hamilton.

Note 1.

But all eyes are turned on one Black Friar.

"But most of all he was greved by certane wicked men, amongis whome Campbell the Blak Freir was principall, who continuallie cryed, 'Convert, heretick: call upoun our Lady: say Salve Regina,' etc.: To whome he answered, 'Departe, and trouble me not, ye messingeris of Sathan.' Bott whill that the foirsaid Freir still roared one thing in great vehemency, he said unto him, 'Wicked man, thou knowis the contrair, and the contrair to me thou hast confessed: I appeall thee befoir the tribunall seatt of Jesus Christ!' * * * * * The said Freir departed this lyif within few dayis after, in what estait we refer to the manifestation of the general day. But it was plainlie knawin that he dyed in Glaskow, in a phrenesye, and as one dispared."—John Knox's *Historie.*

Note 2.

But a voice came forth from the mantling fire,
As a trumpet clear and loud!

"At length the fire was kindled, and, amidst the noise and fury of the flames, he was distinctly heard pronouncing these last words, 'How long, O Lord! shall darkness cover this realm? How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men? Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit!'"—M'Crie's *Sketches of Church History.*

THE CHILD OF JAMES MELVILLE.

The Child of James Melville,

BORN JULY 9, 1586—DIED ABOUT JANUARY, 1588.

"This page, if thou be a pater (parent-father) that reads it, thou wilt apardone me; if nocht, suspend thy censure till thou be a father, as said the grave Lacedæmonian Agesilaus."—*Autobiography of James Melville.*

ONE time—my soul was pierced as with a sword—
Contending still with men untaught and wild—
When He who to the prophet lent his gourd,
Gave me the solace of a pleasant child!

A summer gift—my precious flower was given—
A very summer fragrance was its life;
Its clear eyes soothed me as the blue of heaven,
When home I turned—a weary man of strife!

With unformed laughter—musically sweet—
How soon the wakening babe would meet my kiss;
With outstretched arms, its care-wrought father greet—
Oh! in the desert, what a spring was this!

A few short months it blossomed near my heart—
A few short months—else toilsome all, and sad;
But that home solace nerved me for my part,
And of the babe I was exceeding glad!

Alas! my pretty bud, scarce formed, was dying—
(The prophet's gourd—it withered in a night!)
And He who gave me all—my heart's pulse trying—
Took gently home the child of my delight!

Not rudely culled—not suddenly it perished—
But gradual faded from our love away!
As if, still, secret dews, its life that cherished,
Were drop by drop withheld—and day by day!

My blessed Master saved me from repining,
So tenderly He sued me for His own—
So beautiful He made my babe's declining—
Its dying blessed me as its birth had done!

And daily to my board at noon and even,
Our fading flower I bade his mother bring,
That we might commune—of our rest in heaven;
Gazing the while on death—without its sting!

And of the ransom for that baby paid—
So very sweet at times our converse seemed,
That the sure truth—of grief a gladness made—
Our little lamb—by God's own Lamb redeemed!

—There were two milkwhite doves—my wife had nourished,
And I too loved, erewhile, at times to stand—
Marking how each the other fondly cherished—
And fed them from my baby's dimpled hand!

So tame they grew—that to his cradle flying—
Full oft they cooed him to his noontide rest;
And to the murmurs of his sleep replying,
Crept gently in, and nestled in his breast!

'Twas a fair sight—the snow-pale infant sleeping,
So fondly guardianed by those creatures mild;
Watch o'er his closed eyes—their bright eyes keeping—
Wondrous the love betwixt the birds and child!

Still as he sickened—seemed the doves too dwining—
Forsook their food, and loathed their pretty play;
And on the day he died—with sad note pining,
One gentle bird would not be frayed away!

His mother found it—when she rose, sad-hearted,
At early dawn—with sense of nearing ill;

And when, at last, the little spirit parted,
  The dove died too—as if of its heart chill!

The other flew to meet my sad home riding,
  As with a human sorrow in its coo;—
To my dead child—and its dead mate then guiding,
  Most pitifully plained—and parted too!

'Twas my first "hansel"* and "propine"† to heaven!
  And as I laid my darling 'neath the sod—
Precious His comforts—once an infant given—
  And offered with two turtle-doves to God!

* Present. † Earnest, pledge.

Note to the Child of James Melville.

September 27, 1849.

The characters of the two Melvilles are beautifully contrasted in history. Andrew, the fiery uncle, who ventured to tell his king, when usurping authority over the free Church of Christ, that he was but "God's sillie (weak) vassal;" and James, the gentle nephew, who says of himself on the same occasion, that he was employed to speak for the rest, because "I could propone the mater in a mild and smooth manner, quhilk the king lyked best of." The one was the complement of the other—much as Melancthon was of Luther—and Œcolampadius of Zuingle; and it is most interesting to observe, how, in times of trial and emergency to His Church, it has been the Lord's usual (though by no means invariable) method to send forth his servants like the seventy of old—two and two—to their work. The tenderest affection united the Melvilles. Their family love and

union stands out in affecting contrast to the stormy aspect of the times in which they lived, and the rough work of the sanctuary in which they were necessarily engaged—building the walls of Jerusalem with their weapons ever in their hands. In extracting the preceding beautiful incident from the "Autobiography of James Melville," the aim has been to present in a modern garb, one out of many of the touches of feeling and nature contained in that delightful work, in the hope that it may lead some to search for themselves into its treasures, unscared by the ill repute for controversial bitterness and want of refinement, under which the works of our Scottish Reformers, without even a hearing in their defence, have been too generally consigned to the shelf!

THE WITNESS STONES OF RUTHERFORD

The Witness Stones of Rutherford.

"Woods, trees, meadows, and hills, are my witnesses, that I drew on a fair match between Christ and Anworth."—RUTHERFORD'S *Letters.*

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD became Minister of Anworth in Galloway in 1627. It is related, that on first coming to the parish, there was a piece of ground on Mossrobin farm, where on Sabbath afternoon the people used to play at football. On one occasion he repaired to the spot, and pointed out their sin, calling on the objects round to be witnesses against them if they persevered, especially three large stones (Josh. xxiv. 27), two of which still remain, and are called "Rutherford's Witnesses."—Vide Rev. A. BONAR'S *Edition of Rutherford's Letters.*

IT is a summer Sabbath time—
And o'er Cairnharrow's lofty brow,
The summer noontide at its prime,
Floateth in purple radiance now;

While on Ben Devan's distant crest,
One stainless cloud hath come to rest;
And o'er fair isle, and gleaming sea,
Distills a glad tranquillity!

O! hearts that God hath touched can tell,
How o'er this earth—in ruin laid—
Still breathes, at times, the Sabbath spell,
'Mid sin and sorrow undecayed!
What sympathies in earth and air,
With man's appointed rest there are—
And how a light comes down from heaven,
To crown the day that God hath given!

—The preacher's voice but now is still—
His hearers take their various way;

Some skirt the shore—some climb the hill—
  Some turn them to the woods to pray;—
For still the greenwood's quivering screen,
A very Bethel oft hath been,
Where Scotland's peasant saints have found,
That all God's earth is holy ground!

And many a germ of faith and prayer,
  And many a truth instinct with power,
The contrite heart away may bear,
  To feed on in its lonely hour;
For he, whose tones upon the ear[1]
Yet vibrate—fraught with love and fear,
Is one, whose words of living flame,
A baptism of fire proclaim!

Oh! early bathed in light and love!
  Oh! early tuned to praise and prayer!
How soared thine ardent soul above,
  To bask it in the God-light there!
How seemed it—that thy spirit pressed
At times so near thy Saviour's breast,
That mortal speech all powerless fell,
Struggling with love—unspeakable!

And yet again, so simply clear,
  The gospel-message thou couldst speak,
That childhood's heart—and childhood's ear,
  Gave heed in comprehension meek;
And many a soul long dead in sin,
Felt stirrings of new life within!
And learned to count all gain a loss,
That stood between it and the Cross!

But ah! if even the Master's word,
  So often all unheeded fell—
How shall the servant's voice be heard,
  Where still abides the strong man's spell!
Save when the Spirit in His might,
Moves o'er the soul—commanding light—
How vain the glorious truth we find—
As sunrise bursting o'er the blind!

—His lot hath fallen on evil days,
  For subtle mischiefs are abroad;
That Judas-like—a thousand ways—
  First kiss—and then betray their Lord!
Mocking a faith—still lip profest—
Sapping the Sabbath's sacred rest—
That waymark—from creation given,
To point, and guard, the road to heaven!

'Tis an old strife—but oft renewed—
For Satan knows his vantage well!
Might he but blast that heavenly good,
Earth were but one vast porch for hell!
And well he bears with them that pray,
So they will but "arise and play;"
He gains the whole—in filching half—
God's Israel serves the golden calf!

—The preacher's voice but now is still—
His flock is scattering far and near;
But oh! of those who climb the hill,
How jars the laughter on his ear!
Young spirits stout in nature's pride,
All vain remonstrance scoffed aside—
Disciples of that easy time,
Trained on, in Folly's school, to crime!

And he is gone apart to pray,
As often he hath prayed before;
"A king hath warranted their play,*—
Lord Jesus art *Thou* King no more?
Still must I vainly strive to keep,
In Thy great name, these few poor sheep;
Thy love—Thy grace—all vainly tell,
While they sport madly on to hell!"

"Oh Thou! oh Thou! mine Holy One!
Hast Thou not power in earth and heaven?
And wilt Thou not—from Thy high throne,
Still guard the blessing thou hast given?—
Nor let the tempting fiend invade,
The Sabbath Thou for man hast made—
That one brief day, redeemed and blessed,
When fell the curse o'er all the rest?"

* Referring to the "Book of Sports."

—The laugh is loud—the day is bright,
The ball is glancing here and there—
Young limbs are fleet—young hearts are light—
What reck they of a bigot's prayer?—
And yet an awe of shame there fell,
Even on the boldest—like a spell—
When issuing sudden from the wood,
Full in their midst the Pastor stood!

"The steed his six days' work hath done,—
He gambols in his paddock field;
The young lambs sport beneath the sun—
Such as they have to God they yield—
The o'erburthened beast lies down to rest,
Enjoys *his* Sabbath—and is blest;—
If ye be even such as they,
Then find your pleasure while ye may!

"But if that thing ye bear within,
For which a God came down to die;—
That—washed in blood, or foul with sin,—
Must share His own eternity!—
If shrinks in every guilty breast,
Even as I speak, that conscious guest—
Upon your souls the charge I lay,
Ye spurn not at the Sabbath-day!

"My Master's grace this day hath given,
That even the dead His voice may hear—
And now, as sinners unforgiven,
I summon you—to turn—and fear!
And these gray stones on either hand—
God's witnesses between us stand—
If this my warning be withstood,
That I am pure from your souls' blood!"

—The wood receives him from their sight—
His thrilling tones are heard no more;—
Words are but words—the day is bright—
On with the pastime as before!
But those gray watchers standing by,
Still keep their witness silently—
And a strange awe the boldest own,
Rebuked in presence of a stone!

Oh! conscience is a wondrous thing,
When God awakes it in its might—
The undying worm—whose full-grown sting,
Through lost eternity shall smite!—
A bulrush, in the Spirit's hand,
Becomes a sceptre of command;—

As sands, outstretched by God's decree,
Bind the illimitable sea!

—Green Anworth keeps her Sabbath rest,
Through many a change of good and ill;—
Outwearied—on his Saviour's breast
He sleeps—whose name embalms her still!
And martyr graves beneath the sod,
Hold some—his first-fruits unto God;
And only grayhaired sires can tell,
"In their bairn days they loved him well!"

But children's children still they bring,
When summer bells are in the grass;
And the young woods are showering
Sweet fragrance o'er them as they pass,

To gaze on those old stones—and hear,
What silent witness yet they bear,
As generations fleet away,
How Anworth keeps her Sabbath-day!

And now a sadder tale they tell,
One watcher missing in its place;[2]
And the strange doom that him befell,
Who—scoffing—hurled it from its base!—
And many a cheek is blanched with fear,
And deeper reverence still they bear,
For each remaining witness stone,—
More hallowed for the one that's gone!

O Scotland! home of Sabbath rest!
Thy mountains still about thee stand—
To witness, how thou *hast* been blest,
In keeping Eden's light command!—

Woe! when our eyes despised shall see,
That sign* between thy God and thee—
One Sabbath sanction overthrown,
Or scoffers move—one Witness stone!

1847.

* Ezekiel xx. 12.—"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a *sign between me and them*, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."—*Vide* also Exodus xxxi. 13.

Notes to the Witness Stones of Rutherford.

Note 1.

For he, whose tones upon the ear
Yet vibrate—fraught with love and fear.

A London merchant, a native of England, having come down to Scotland in the course of business, repaired to St. Andrews, where he heard Robert Blair preach. He afterwards heard Samuel Rutherford. On the Sabbath following he went to Irvine, where he heard David Dickson. When he returned to London, his friends asked him, What news from Scotland? to whom he replied, That he had great and good news to tell them. They little suspected what these tidings might be, as hitherto he had been careless about religion. He told them, that at St. Andrews he had heard one Mr. Blair preach, and, after describing his

features and stature, he added, "That man showed me the majesty of God. I afterwards heard," continued he, "a little fair man preach (Mr. Rutherford), *and that man showed me the loveliness of Christ.* Then I came and heard at Irvine, a well-favored, proper old man with a long beard, and that man showed me all my heart!"

Note 2.

And now a sadder tale they tell,
One watcher missing in its place.

It is related that some workmen building a new dyke on the farm of Mossrobin, were in want of stones for their work. One of them, who was a profane character, proposed making use of "Rutherford's Witnesses," as they were called, which stood near at hand. His companions rejected the proposition with horror, when the man, stimulated by the bad ambition of showing himself superior to the fear of God, wished, with dreadful imprecations, that the first morsel he took might choke him, if he did not build one of the stones into the dyke before breakfast. He accordingly broke up the stone, and accomplished his threat; but the

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story adds, that on sitting down to his meal, and putting the first morsel into his mouth, he suddenly turned black in the face, fell back, and expired. It will easily be guessed the two other "Witnesses" remain to this day.

THE SIGNING OF THE COVENANT

IN THE

Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh.

SIGNING THE COVENANT

p 241

The Signing of the Covenant in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh.

March 1, 1638.

"This was the day of the Lord's power, in which multitudes offered themselves most willingly, like the dewdrops of the morning—this was, indeed, the great day of Israel, wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed—the day of the Redeemer's strength, on which the princes of the people assembled to swear their allegiance to the King of kings."—ALEXANDER HENDERSON.

I'M old! I'm old! I'm very frail! my eyes are dim
with age—
Scarce can I trace the words of life upon this
sacred page;

Then out upon the unquiet heart!—that yearns,
and will not rest,
To be where Scotland rallies now her truest and
her best!

I heard them with the earliest dawn! I heard them
gathering fast—
A sound, as on the mighty sea, the menace of the
blast—
A mingled sound of thousand feet, and voices blent
in one,
And on the living spring-tide swept—and I was
left alone!

Alone! alone! oh wearily the day hath lingered by!
With now and then a far-off shout, cleaving the
distant sky:

Yet have I wrestled with my God—some hours as moments past;
But age halts soon—my son, my son! it is thy step at last!

"Father! a solemn eve hath fallen—a mighty deed is done—
Pledged to his country and his God—receive and bless thy son!
And pray, my father—ceaseless pray—that I may never shame,
The oath of God, to which this day, I have affixed my name!

—"We met within the ancient walls, where once the Greyfriars ruled,
A concourse vast of earnest men, in common danger schooled;

Earth's titled ones—God's ministers—poor—rich—
together driven—
Christ's flock, awaiting, 'neath the storm, their
Shepherd's sign from heaven!

"And solemnly, oh solemnly! went up the breath
of prayer,
The silence, as a shadow, brooding o'er the thou-
sands there—
Only the pulse of each strong heart amid the still-
ness heard,
Through which the voice of Henderson a nation's
suit preferred!

"Ay, father! there was One, amid our convocation
then,
Whose eyes are as a flame of fire, to search the
souls of men;

Whose Spirit, moving wondrously, from heart to heart, can bring—
A willing people to the feet of their Almighty King!

"And when the noble Loudon[1] spake of Scotland's gospel prime,
Her Covenants of other days—her glad espousal time—
How fearless, through the wilderness, her God she followed still,
And found a very present help in every time of ill—

"Till one by one, her mighty men were gathered to their graves,
And sons, degenerate from their sires, made Christ's own freemen slaves—

Discrowning His anointed head to gem an earthly brow—
Making our Father's holy house the ruin it is now!—

"Oh! then there was such weeping, through that bowed and silent throng,
Such self-accusing bitterness for guilt contracted long,
Such binding of the broken vows upon the soul once more—
That very moment made us free—as we were free of yore!

"And now, with tone distinct and clear, as one whose word is power,
Johnston of Warriston[2] stood forth, (God's gift in danger's hour,)

A mighty parchment in his hand, from which he read—the while
A sudden sunburst filled the place with heaven's approving smile!

"He ended—and there was a pause—a pause of holy fear—
Who, to attest the oath of God, shall first adventure near—
It was not doubt, but solemn awe, and self-distrusting shame,
And that each deemed his brother bore a less unworthy name!

"Till the good Earl of Sutherland—the brave old Earl and true,
One moment bowed his reverent head, then toward the table drew;

'So deal my God with me, and mine, till latest
ages be,
As we prove steadfast in this bond, I bind on them
and me!'

"Then followed Rothes quickly on—Cassilis, and
Hay, and Home;
Montrose,[3] as if almost he grudged to lose the
foremost room—
Loudon, his country's beacon-light amid her mirki-
est hour,
With many a noble name beside—a kingdom's hope
and flower!

"Now Henderson, the called of God[4]—Dickson,
the owned of heaven,[5]
(Surely a blessing waits the land to which such
guides are given!)

Guthrie[6]—as though upon the cast his life he
longed to stake,
And Rutherford,[7] with look inspired—as if his
Master spake!

"Bless God, my father, who hath lent the land we
love so well,
Sons valiant for the truth on earth, more than my
tongue can tell—
To name but those already proved by many a
searching test,
Would wile us from the hour of prayer, and steal
thy midnight rest!

"Yet must thou hear—when all had signed within
the house of God,
How still a multitude without, each on the other
trod—

Pressing with fervent footsteps on, and many an earnest prayer,
That they in Scotland's Covenant might register their share!

"Oh! Arthur's Seat gave back the shout of that assembled crowd,
As one bare forth the mighty bond—and many wept aloud—
They spread it on a tombstone head—(a martyr slept beneath)—
And some subscribed it with their blood, and added 'Until death!'

"Ay! young and old were moved alike—with prayers, and groans, and tears,
Surely the fruit of such a day is yet for many years!

And, owned in heaven, the strong appeal of each
uplifted hand,
As evening's sun went down upon the covenanted
land!"

—That old man rose up in his place—he bared his
locks of gray;
"Lord, let thy servant now depart, for I have seen
this day—
Upon my head in early youth, John Knox's hand
hath lain,[8]
And I have seen his buried work unsepulchred
again!

"Speed on thou covenanted cause! God's blessing
upon thee!
Baptized in Scotland's dearest blood—albeit thou
needs must be—

Christ came not to send peace on earth—only may
that red rain,
Still fructify thy living seed till He return again!

"My country! oh my country! yea for thee the
light is sown,*
Only be steadfast in thy trust—let no man take
thy crown!
Thine be the standard-bearer's place! the post of
suffering high—
God's blessing on the Covenant—I'll sign it ere I
die!"

1847.

* Ps. xcvii. 11.

Notes to the Signing of the Covenant.

Note 1.

And when the noble Loudon spake of Scotland's gospel prime.

John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, was a nobleman whose patriotism, prudence, eloquence, and fortitude, justly entitle him to be regarded as the chief assertor both of the civil and religious rights of his country. From his youth he attached himself to the Presbyterian interest, which he saw was identified with the cause of civil liberty. On the commencement of the contentions in 1638, he took an active share in opposing the despotic measures of the court; and on one occasion roundly told the king's commissioner, in language which was soon re-echoed in tones of thunder from every part of the kingdom, "That they knew no other bands between a king and his subjects, but those of re-

ligion and the laws. If these are broken," he said, "men's lives are not dear to them: *boasted* (threatened) we shall not be; such fears are past with us."—DR. M'CRIE'S *Sketches of Church History.*

NOTE 2.

Johnston of Warriston stood forth, (God's gift in danger's hour.)

"Johnston then unrolled the vast sheet of parchment, and in a clear and steady voice read the Covenant aloud."—HETHERINGTON'S *History.*

Burnet (who was his relation) says of him "He looked at the Covenant as the setting Christ on his throne, and so was out of measure zealous in it." He afterwards, in old age and physical weakness, sealed it with his blood; his last words being, "The Lord has graciously comforted me. O pray, pray! praise, praise!"

Note 3.

Montrose, as if almost he grudged to lose the foremost room.

It should never be forgotten, that Montrose, afterwards the great enemy of the Covenanters, was among the first and most eager to sign the Covenant, and one of the very few who resorted to coercive measures in enforcing it. The Marquis of Hamilton (in one of his Letters to King Charles I.), says of him, "There are many others as forward in show, amongst whom none more vainly foolish than Montrose."—Burnet.

Note 4.

Now Henderson, the called of God.

"In the early part of his life Mr. Henderson had been, to say the least, neutral in the contest between presbytery and episcopacy; there is even reason to think he was a de-

fender of the corruptions introduced by the bishops. As a proof of this, he accepted a presentation from Archbishop Gladstanes to the parish of Leuchars, and such was the repugnance of the people there to his induction, that on the day of ordination they barricaded the church doors, so that the ministers, with Henderson, were obliged to effect their entrance by the window. Some time after, having heard that Robert Bruce was to preach at a communion in the neighborhood, Henderson, attracted by curiosity, went secretly to hear him, and placed himself in a dark corner of the church, where he might remain most concealed. Bruce came into the pulpit, and after a pause, according to his usual manner, which fixed Henderson's attention, he read, with his wonted dignity and deliberation, these words as his text:—'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.' These words, so literally applicable to the manner in which he had entered upon his ministry, went 'like drawn swords' to his inmost soul. He who wished to conceal himself from the eyes of men, felt that he was naked and opened before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. In short, the discourse of this powerful preacher was, by the Divine blessing, the means of Henderson's conversion; and ever after he retained a great affection for Bruce, whom he called his spiritual father."—M'Crie's *Sketches of Scottish Church History.*

Note 5.

—Dickson, the owned of heaven.

David Dickson, minister of Irvine, under whose preaching there was a most remarkable revival of religion, not only in that town, but throughout all the surrounding country. Yet he himself was so far from being exalted in spirit by the great blessing that attended his ministry, that he always modestly observed, "That the vintage of Irvine was not equal to the gleaning grapes of Ayr in John Welch's time." He was the author of that exquisite sacred poem, "O Mother dear, Jerusalem," and other pieces.

Note 6.

Guthrie—as though upon the cast his life he longed to stake.

"When he had reached the capital, and was entering by the Westport, the first person he met was the city executioner in official costume. Guthrie started at the sight of this grim functionary, and, as he mused upon the subject,

he could not help feeling that this encounter had a strange connection with the object on which he was bound. But onward he still fared to the churchyard of the Greyfriars, and in presence of the assembled thousands subscribed his name. When he had thus pledged himself to Heaven, he said to his brethren who were standing around him, 'I know that I shall die for what I have done this day, but I cannot die in a better cause.'"—*Life of Guthrie.*

Note 7.

And Rutherford, with look inspired—as if his Master spake.

"I have known many great and good ministers in this Church," said an aged contemporary pastor who survived the Revolution, "but for such a piece of clay as Mr. Rutherford was, I never knew one in Scotland to whom so many great gifts were given; for he seemed to be altogether taken up with every thing good, and excellent, and useful. He seemed to be always praying, always preaching, always visiting the sick, always catechising, always writing and studying. He had two quick eyes, *and when he walked it*

was observed that he held aye his face upward. He had a strange utterance in the pulpit—a kind of *skreigh* that I have never heard the like. Many times I thought he would have flown out of the pulpit when he came to speak of Jesus Christ. He was never in his right element but when he was commending him. He would have fallen asleep in bed speaking of Christ."—M'CRIE's *Sketches.*

NOTE 8.

Upon my head in early youth, John Knox's hand hath lain.

"The Reformer was accustomed in old age to amuse himself by walking in St. Leonard's yard, and to look with peculiar complacency on the students, whom he regarded as the rising hope of the Church. He would sometimes call them to him, and bless them, and exhort them to be diligent in their studies, to attend to the instruction of their teachers, and imitate the good example which they set before them, to acquaint themselves with God, and with the great work which he had lately performed in their native country, and to cleave to the good cause. These familiar

advices from a person so venerable, made a deep impression on the minds of the young men."—M'CRIE's *Life of Knox*.

Knox died in 1572. It is therefore quite possible that one of the students so favored by him might be alive, in a green old age, to witness the signing of the Covenant in 1638.

THE DEATHBED OF RUTHERFORD.

The Deathbed of Rutherford.

"I hear him saying to me, Come up hither."—RUTHERFORD'S *Last Words.*

RUTHERFORD died in 1661, shortly after his book called "Lex Rex" was burnt by the hangman at Edinburgh, and at the gates of the New College of St. Andrews, where he was regent and professor of divinity. He departed just in time to avoid an ignominious death; for, though every body knew he was dying, the Council had, with impotent malice, summoned him to appear before them at Edinburgh on a charge of high treason. When the summons came he said, "Tell them I have got a summons already before a superior judge and judicatory, and I behove to answer my first summons; and, ere your day arrive, I will be where few kings and great folks come." When they returned and told that he was dying, the parliament, with a few dissent-

ing voices, voted that he should not be allowed to die in the college! Upon this Lord Burleigh said, "Ye have voted that honest man out of his college, but ye cannot vote him out of heaven!"

TREAD lightly through the darkened room, for a
sick man lieth there,
And, 'mid the dimness, only stirs the whispered
breath of prayer;
As anxious hearts take watch by turns beside the
lowly bed,
Where sleep the awful stillness wears—that soon
must wrap the dead!

Hours hath he known of fevered pain—but now
his rest is calm,
As though upon the spirit worn distilled some
healing balm—

It may be that his dreaming ear wakes old accustomed words,
Or drinks once more the matin song of Anworth's "blessed birds!"*

O! green and fresh upon his soul, those early haunts arise,
His kirk—his home—his wild wood walk—with all their memories—
The very rushing of the burn, by which so oft he trod,
The while on eagle wings of faith his spirit met its God!

* Onely I think the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk of Anworth, "blessed birds."—RUTHERFORD'S *Letters*.

A smile hath brightened on his lip—a light around his brow—
Oh! surely, "words unspeakable," that dreamer listeth now—
And glories of the upper sky, his raptured senses steep,
Blent with the whispers of His love—who gives His loved ones sleep!

But hark!—a sound!—a tramp of horse!—a loud, harsh, wranging din!
Oh! rudely on that dream of heaven, this world hath broken in—
In vain affection's earnest plea—the intruders forward press—
And with a struggling spasm of pain, he wakes to consciousness!

Strange lights are streaming through the room—
strange forms are round his bed—
Slowly his dazzled sense takes in, each shape and
sound of dread—
"False traitor to thy country's laws—and to thy
sovereign lord,
I summon thee to meet thy doom, thou felon
Rutherford!"

Feebly the sick man raised his hand—his hand so
thin and pale,
And something in the hollow eye, made that rude
speaker quail—
"Man! thou hast sped thine errand well!—yet is
it wasted breath,
Except the great ones of the earth can break my
tryst with death!

"A few brief days—or briefer hours—and I am
going home,
Unto mine own prepared place, where but few great
ones come!
And to the judgment seat of Him, who sealed me
with His seal—
'Gainst evil tongues, and evil men, I make my last
appeal!

"A traitor was his name on earth!—a felon's doom
His fate—
Thrice welcome were my Master's cup—but it hath
come too late—
The summons of that mightiest King, to whom all
kings must bow,
Is on me for an earlier day—is on me even now!

"I hear—I hear—the chariot wheels, that bring
my Saviour nigh,
For me He bears a golden crown—a harp of melody—
For me He opens wide His arms—He shows His
wounded side—
Lord! 'tis my passport into life!—I live—for
Thou hast died!"

They give his writings to the flames—they brand
his grave with shame—
A hissing in the mouth of fools, becomes his hon-
ored name—
And darkness wraps awhile the land, for which he
prayed and strove,
But blessed in the Lord his death—and blest his
rest above!

1843.

THE MARTYR'S CHILD.

The Martyr's Child.

"My lords, let never this sentence affect you more than it does me, and let never my blood be required of the king's family."—*Life of Guthrie.*

"The Covenants! the Covenants! shall yet be Scotland's reviving!"—GUTHRIE'S *Last Words.*

"JAMES GUTHRIE had a son named William, about four or five years old; so young, indeed, and therefore so ignorant of the dismal tragedy that was approaching, that James Cowie (Mr. Guthrie's servant, precentor, and amanuensis) could scarcely detain him from playing in the streets on the day of his father's execution. Guthrie, whose soul yearned over his boy, so soon to become an orphan, took him upon his knee and gave him such advices as were suit-

ed to his capacity. He bade him to become serious—to become religious—and to be sure to devote himself to that honest and holy course in which his father had walked to the death. 'Willie,' he said, 'they will tell you, and cast up to you, that your father was hanged; but think not shame of it, for it is upon a good cause.' After the execution, the head was set up on the Nether Bow Port as a spectacle for the finger of scorn to point at. But among those who repaired thither, and looked up at the long grey hairs rustling in the wind, and the features embrowning and drying in the sun, one little boy was often seen gazing fixedly upon that countenance with looks of love and terror—and still returning, day after day, and hour after hour, as if there was for him a language in that silent head which none else could hear. And who could that child be, but Guthrie's young son—the little 'Willie' of the Martyr's last affectionate counsels and cares? His love of playing in the streets was over now; a new occupation had absorbed him; and as he returned from these pilgrimages, we may conceive with what feelings his mother heard him when, on her anxious inquiry as to where he had been, his usual reply was, 'I have been seeing my father's head!' The dying admonitions of the departed parent, enforced by such a solemnizing spectacle, seem to have sunk deep into William's heart; for it was observed that after his father's death, he spent much time in solitude, and was often employed in prayer. Resolving to walk in his father's steps, he directed his studies to the Church, and became a scholar

of excellent promise; but he died in early youth, when he was entering upon trials to be licensed as a preacher."—*Life of James Guthrie* by Rev. Thomas Thomson.

O, the sunrise! the sunrise! hath wondrous power
  To gladden all living things;
It breaks on the chill night's mirkiest hour,
  Like a smile from the King of kings!
'Tis earliest June—and the earth hath thrilled,
  With the earnest of summer given;
And the very city's self is filled
  With the breath and the beam of heaven!

A glory is circling the stern dark brow,
  Of Dunedin's fortress old,
And a gleam is waking—more faintly now,
  Her Tolbooth prison-hold—

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Where one hath risen—but not from sleep—
  To gaze on that dawning sky—
"True wife! what aileth thee now to weep,
  Heaven brightens ere I die!"

There are mustering groups in the silent streets,
  That are silent no longer now;
Though briefly each other his fellow greets,
  As with doubting on his brow!
It seemeth as if an anguish pressed,
  Alike on a nation's heart—
One mighty load—upon every breast,
  Which yet each must bear apart!

And still in its joy—o'er that joyless throng,
  The brightening day-dawn smiled;
While threading the crowd's dense maze along,
  Came an old man—and a child—

The man was woe-worn past all relief—
  The child's young brow was fair—
So sunny, it seemed that no frost of grief
  Could linger a moment there!

And onward he tripped at the old man's side,
  With many a step for one—
And smiled in the face of his ancient guide,
  As to bid his grief begone!
And still as the sunbeam before him danced,
  On the shade of the narrow street;
His little hands he would clap entranced,
  And chase it with eager feet!

"O whist ye, my bairn," said the old man then,
  "And is this a time for play?
Your hairs may be white—ere the half ye'll ken,
  Of the loss ye shall thole this day!"

"Ye said I should look in my father's face,
And sit on my father's knee—
Long, long he has lain in yon darksome place,
But I know he'll come home with me!"

"O whist ye my bairn," quoth the old man still,
"For a better home he's bound,
But first he must suffer his Master's will,
And lie in the chill, damp ground!"
The child looked wistfully up again:
"His master is God on high;
He sends the sun—and He stays the rain—
He'll make it both warm and dry!"

—They have entered in by the dismal door,
They have mounted the weary stair;
And the mirth of the young child's heart is o'er,
For no sunbeam follows there!

With a shuddering dread, as the harsh key grates,
By the old man's side he clings;
But he hears a voice—and no longer waits—
To his father's heart he springs!

"My child! my own child! am I clasping thee now,
My God, all Thy will be done!"
And he whom no terror of earth could bow,*
Rained tears upon his son!
"Now rest thee, my Willie, upon my knee,
For thy father's hours are brief—
And store up my words, with thy love for me,
Engraved on thy heart's first grief!

* Characterized by Cromwell as "the short man who would not bow."

"They will tell thee, my bairn, that thy father died
A death both of sin and shame;
And the finger of scorn—and the foot of pride—
Will be busy with my name—
But heed them not, boy! for the cause of God
I render this day my breath—
And tread thou the path that thy father trod,
Though it lead to thy father's death!"

"For my Master's honor—my Master's Crown—
A martyr 'tis mine to be—
And the orphan's God shall look kindly down,
My pleasant child, on thee!
I seal thee now with my parting kiss,
Till at His right hand we meet—
Death! death! thy bitterest drop is this,
All else in thy cup is sweet!"

The child clings close to his father's heart,
  But they bear him by force away—
A gentle force—but they needs must part—
  And that old man guides his way.
Once more they are treading the crowded street—
  But no longer the sunlight smiled—
And looks of pity from some they meet,
  For they know the martyr's child!

"Yon darksome thing that shuts out the sky,
  O tell me what may it be?
It scares my heart, though I know not why,
  For it seems to gloom on me!"
With a quivering lip, and a thrill of awe—
  Was the old man's answer given—
"'Tis a ladder, poor bairn, such as Jacob saw,
  By which angels mount to heaven!"

* * * * * *

—They have set his head on the Nether Bow,
  To scorch in the summer air;
And months go by—and the winter's snow,
  Falls white on its thin grey hair:
And still the same look that in death he wore,
  Is sealed on the solemn brow—
A look as of one who hath travailed sore,
  But whose pangs are ended now!

Through years of oppression, and blood, and shame,
  The earth as a wine-press trod—
That silent witness abides the same,
  In its mute appeal to God!
And many a saint hath waxed strong to bear,
  While musing in that sad place—
And the heart of the tyrant hath failed for fear,
  In the awe of the still, stern face!

There were prophet-words on those lips in death,
That Scotland remembers still—
And she looks for her God's awakening breath,
Through the long, long night of ill!
"They may scatter their dust to the winds of heaven—
To the bounds of the utmost sea—
But her Covenants—burned, reviled, and riven—
Shall yet her reviving be!"

—There sitteth a child by the Nether Bow,
In the light of the summer sky—
And he steals there yet in the winter's snow,
But he shuns the passers by;
A fair, pale child, with a faded cheek,
As a lily in darkness reared,
And an eye, in its sad abstraction meek,
As if nothing he hoped or feared!

In the early dawn—at the fall of eve—
  But not in the noon of day;
And he doth not weep—and he doth not grieve,
  But he never was seen to play!
A child in whom childhood's life is dead—
  Its sweet light marred and dim—
And he gazes up at that awful head,
  As though it held speech with him!

Oh! a strange, sad sight, was the converse mute,
  Of the dead and the living there;
And thoughts in that young child's soul took root,
  Which manhood might scarcely bear!
But ever he meekly went his way,
  As the stars came o'er the place—
And his mother wept, as she heard him say,
  "I have seen my father's face!"

Years faded and died, and the child was gone,
  But a pale youth came instead;
In the solemn eve, and at early dawn,
  To gaze on the awful head!
And oft when the moonlight fell in showers,
  He would linger the night long there;
And his spirit went up through those silent hours,
  To his father's God in prayer!

The shadow had passed from his heart and brow,
  And a deep calm filled his breast;
For the peace of God was his portion now,
  And his weary soul had rest!
The martyr's God had looked kindly down,
  On the martyr's orphan son;
And the Spirit had sealed him for His own,
  And his goal was almost won!

There was fond hope cherished—and earnest given,
Of a course like his father's high;
But the seed that had ripened so soon for heaven,
God gathered to the sky!
He comes no more to the 'customed place—
In vain would affection save—
He hath looked his last on his father's face,
And he lies in his mother's grave!

1847.

THE GRAVE OF CAMERON

PEDEN AT CAMERON'S GRAVE.

p 518

Peden at the Grave of Cameron.

"A dream of those ages of darkness and blood,
When the minister's home was the mountain and wood—
When in Wellwood's dark valley the standard of Zion,
All bloody and torn, 'mong the heather was lying."

HISLOP.

THIS poem (with the three that succeed it) refers to the darkest period of Scotland's dark history—between the Restoration and the Revolution—a time, during the whole of which, her annals may be said to have been traced in blood. From the sending down of the Highland host, as it was called, in the end of the year 1677, to waste and depopulate the western counties, where the Presbyterian interest was strongest, to the day when indignant Britain hurled the tyrant James from his throne, the miserable peasantry of Ayrshire and Galloway, more especially, enjoyed

not the breathing space of a day; and if the persecution appeared at any season to relax, it was simply because the agents of oppression found no more spoils to gather, and no more victims to destroy.

On the 20th July, 1680, Richard Cameron, with a handful of his followers, fell, not without a brave resistance, at Ayrsmoss. The head and hands of Cameron were severed from his body, and with a cold-blooded ferocity, strongly characteristic of the times, and of the men, they were carried by the dragoons of Earlshall to Edinburgh, and exposed before the eyes of his old father, who had long lain a prisoner there. With the very wantonness of cruelty, they taunted the bereaved parent by asking if he knew the ghastly relics? "I know, I know them!" said the poor old man, "they are my dear, dear son's. Good is the will of the Lord who cannot wrong me nor mine, but has made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days!" This anecdote affords as fair an illustration as can be given, of the spirit which animated the two parties. Cameron's headless body was buried where he fell, and to that lone grave did Alexander Peden, a fellow-laborer in the gospel, repair, and, sitting down by the spot where his friend of many years had at last found the rest they had both so often wearied for, he could not repress the heart-wrung ejaculation, "O to be wi' thee, Ritchie!"

A SOUND of conflict in the moss! but that hath
passed away,
And through a stormy noon and eve the dead unburied lay;
But when the sun a second time his fitful splendors gave,
One slant ray rested, like a hope, on Cameron's new-made grave!

There had been watchers in the night! strange watchers gaunt and grim,
And wearily—with faint lean hands, they toiled a grave for him—
But ere they laid the headless limbs unto their mangled rest,
As orphaned children sat they down, and wept upon his breast!

O! dreary, dreary, was the lot of Scotland's true ones then—
A famine-stricken remnant, wearing scarce the guise of men;
They burrowed, few and lonely, 'mid the chill, dank mountain caves,
For those who once had sheltered them were in their martyr graves!

A sword had rested on the land—it did not pass away—
Long had they watched and waited, but there dawned no brighter day;
And many had gone back from them, who owned the truth of old,
Because of much iniquity their love was waxen cold!

—There came a worn and weary man to Cameron's
place of rest,
He cast him down upon the sod—he smote upon
his breast—
He wept as only strong men weep, when weep they
must, or die—
And, "Oh! to be wi' thee, Ritchie!" was still his
bitter cry!

"My brother! O my brother! thou hast passed
before thy time,
And thy blood it cries for vengeance, from this
purple land of crime;
Who now shall break the bread of life unto the
faithful band—
Who now upraise the standard that is shattered in
thine hand!

"Alas! alas! for Scotland! the once beloved of heaven—
The crown is fallen from her head—her holy garment riven—
The ashes of her Covenant are scattered far and near,
And the voice speaks loud in judgment—which in love she would not hear!

"Alas! alas! for Scotland! for her mighty ones are gone,
Thou, brother—thou art taken—I am left almost alone;
And my heart is faint within me, and my strength is dried and lost,
A feeble and an aged man—alone against a host!

"O pleasant was it, Ritchie, when we two could
counsel take,
And strengthen one another to be valiant for His
sake—
Now seems it as the sap were dried, from the old
blasted tree,
And the homeless—and the friendless—would fain
lie down with thee!"

It was an hour of weakness—as the old man bowed
his head,
And a bitter anguish rent him, as he communed
with the dead;
It was an hour of conflict—and he groaned beneath
the rod—
But the burthen rolled from off him as he commun
ed with his God!

"My Father! O my Father! shall I pray the Tishbite's prayer,
And weary in the wilderness, while Thou wouldst keep me there!
And shall I fear the coward fear, of standing all alone,
To testify for Zion's King, and the glory of His throne!

"O Jesus! blessed Jesus! I am poor, and frail, and weak,
Let me not utter of mine own—for idle words I speak—
But give me grace to wrestle now, and prompt my faltering tongue,
And breathe Thy name into my soul, and so I shall be strong!

—"I bless Thee for the quiet rest, thy servant taketh now—
I bless Thee for his blessedness, and for his crowned brow—
For every weary step he trod, in faithful following Thee,
And for the good fight foughten well—and closed right valiantly!

"I bless Thee for the hidden ones, who yet uphold Thy name,
Who yet for Zion's King and Crown shall dare the death of shame—
I bless Thee for the light that dawns even now upon my soul,
And brightens all the narrow way with glory from the goal!*

* Peden was by many supposed to possess the spirit of prophecy.

"The hour and power of darkness—it is fleeting fast away—
Light shall arise on Scotland—a glorious gospel day—
Wo! wo! to the opposers, they shall shrivel in His hand—
Thy King shall yet appear for thee, thou covenanted land!

"I see a time of respite—but the people will not bow—
I see a time of judgment—even a darker time than now—
Then Lord uphold Thy faithful ones—as now Thou dost uphold—
And feed them, as Thou still hast fed, Thy chosen flock of old!

"The glory! O the glory; it is bursting on my sight,
Lord! thy poor vessel is too frail for all this blinding light!
Now let Thy good word be fulfilled, and let Thy kingdom come,
And, Lord, even in Thine own best time, take Thy poor servant home!"

Upon the wild and lone Airsmoss, down sank the twilight grey,
In storm and cloud the evening closed upon that cheerless day;
But Peden went his way refreshed, for peace and joy were given—
And Cameron's grave had proved to him the very gate of heaven!

1843.

THE MARTYRDOM OF JOHN BROWN.

JOHN BROWN OF PRIESTHILL,

p 582

The Martyrdom of John Brown.

There, worthy of his masters, came
The despots' champion, bloody Graham,
To stain for aye a warrior's sword,
And lead a fierce, though fawning horde—
The human blood-hounds of the earth—
To hunt the peasant from his hearth!

Poetic Mirror.

It is the cold grey morning,
Slow creeping o'er the hill;
But no wild bird giveth warning—
All insect mirth is still!

In vain the sun would scatter,
The chill dank mists away;
And the rain's unceasing patter,
Weeps in the cheerless day!

Forth o'er the dreary moorland,
The preacher strains his eye;[1]
Once more the staff is in his hand—
Once more he turns to fly.

As the partridge on the mountains,
His life is hunted still;
And his bosom's troubled fountains,
Reflect the coming ill.

He turned him to the mother,
Low bending o'er her child—
A groan he sought to smother,
His voice was hoarse and wild.

"Poor wife! poor wife!" he muttered,
"A weary, dreary dawn—
Bethink the words I uttered,
Upon thy marriage morn.

"I bade thee prize him highly,
For a man of God was he—
Yet keep the garment nigh thee,
His winding-sheet to be!

"Poor wife! poor wife!" he mutters,
"A dreary, weary dawn!"
Ere answering word she utters,
The wanderer is gone!

And she is left all lonely,
With the sickness at her heart,
That for him she loveth only,
Those boding words impart.

Upon her babe she gazes,
  But comfort is not there—
Her eyes to heaven she raises,
  And meekly bows in prayer.

And, as her prayer ascended,
  Her faded eye grew bright—
As though a beam descended,
  And touched her soul with light!

And meekly now she goeth,
  About her household care;
Each homely task she doeth,
  Being sanctified by prayer!

—The evening meal awaits him,
  The wife hath done her part;
What now—what now belates him—
  Oh! the boding at her heart!

Forth o'er the dreary moorland,
She strains her anxious eye—
A tramp of horse!—a ruthless band,
Athwart the mist draw nigh!

With oaths and dreadful laughter,
Athwart the mist they come—
With shouts all breathing slaughter,
They drag her husband home!

"Come forth! come forth! and greet him,
Thou singer of sweet psalms"[2]—
She goeth forth to meet him,
Her infant in her arms!

"Now get thee to thy praying,"
(The bloody Claver'se spake;)[3]
"My haste brooks no delaying—
I've other dogs to take!"

Upon his native heather,
The martyr knelt him down;
"'Tis sudden, O my Father!
But Thou wilt keep thine own!"

"And thou, my wife! my leal one!
O! grudge not o'er thy dead—
I told thee that this hour would come,
When thou and I were wed!"

His last farewell is spoken,
He prays his latest prayer;
In silence all unbroken—
His murderers gird him there!

In silence all unbroken—
Save by that pleading tone,
Pleading for one last token,
From the eternal Throne!

Strong is the good man's weakness,
Mighty the power of prayer—
Almost the victim's meekness,
Subdues the fierce ones there!

Awe-struck and conscience haunted,
Those rude, stern soldiers stand;
A terror all unwonted,
Palsies the ruffian band!

Visions of coming judgment,
Flash on the startled brain—
A moment paused the dire intent,
A moment—but in vain!

"What craven! ho!" the demon shout
Of laughter filled the air;
And Claver'se drew his pistol out—
And hushed the martyr's prayer!

A flash! a sound! a woman's scream—
Earth! thou hast borne these things!
And still, as in a maniac's dream,
That demon laughter rings!

"Ho, ho, gudewife! our work speeds fast,
What think'st thou of him now?"
'Twas strange—the sudden spasm that past
O'er that new widow's brow!

'Twas strange—the white cheeks flushing,
The kindling of the eye;
"Aye thought I only gude of him,
Now muckle mair than aye!"

Grim smiled the bloody Claver'se—
"Now by my troth," he cried,
"Methinks the deed were none the worse,
To lay thee by his side!"

Stern in her spirit's sadness,
She answered, "Even so—
"Even to such height of madness,
Thy cruel rage may go!

"Do with me as ye will—and can"—
(Here swelled her bosom's flood)—
"Yet must thou answer God and man,
For this day's work of blood!"

"To man, my answer will I bear!
For God"—he glanced on high—
The very troopers shrank to hear,
The oath of blasphemy!

Coldly he motioned on his train,
And turned his charger's head;
A moment checked his bridle rein,
Then left her—with the dead!

Left her—the broken-hearted,
  Beside her dead to die—
O surely life hath parted,
  In that sore agony!

No! for her woman's spirit,
  Is strong to bow and bear—
No! for she doth inherit,
  His faith who sleepeth there!

No! for her infant's wailing,
  Forbids her to depart—
And God's own peace prevailing,
  Binds up the broken heart!

—Warned by the tempest token,
  The wanderer seeks once more,
The shelter—oft bespoken,
  Of that lone cottage door.

Clouds o'er the wan moon fleeting,
Shadow the starless night;
Vainly he yearns for greeting,
Of that quench'd ingle-light!

All dark—all dark and lonely—
His hurrying footsteps found;
And that sad widow only,
Low seated on the ground!

Beside her dead she bideth—
O prophet! sadly sooth!—
He knows the grey plaid hideth,
The husband of her youth!

"Poor wife! poor wife! *his* crown is won,
But sore bereaved art *thou!*
Dear Saviour! help the helpless one—
Thou art her husband now!"

1845.

Notes to the Martyrdom of John Brown.

Note 1.

Forth o'er the dreary moorland,
The preacher strains his eye!

The story of John Brown, the "Christian Carrier" of Priesthill, is too well known, and has been too recently embalmed in the graphic pages of Macauley, to need recapitulation here. The visit of Peden to the house the night before the murder, and his haunting impression of impending evil, communicated to the poor wife in his parting words, are highly characteristic of that most simple-hearted and child-like minister of Christ, who was universally believed, in his own day, to possess some gift akin to what is called in the Highlands the second-sight. Many of the

stories of his prophetic powers that have come down to us, bear indeed the marks of a credulous age, and of that exaggeration with which *all* tradition seems, by the operation of some immutable law, to encrust itself in its progress down the stream of time, and the book entitled "Peden's Prophecies," has been fully proved not to be genuine. Still, enough remains, after careful sifting, to remind us, that He who provided meat for Elijah, weary in the wilderness, in the strength of which he went forty days, yet lives, to supply the need of His people according to their peculiar circumstances; and who shall say what cordials He prepares for fainting seasons—what glimpses of futurity and of glory He lets in upon the soul of those, who, standing in jeopardy of their lives every hour, for the name of Jesus, look up, like Stephen, "steadfastly into heaven!"

Note 2.

Come forth—come forth and greet him,
Thou singer of sweet psalms!

About the close of the persecution, a small sect arose, named the *Sweet Singers*, or Gibbites, from their leader, John Gibb, an insane and fanatic sailor, whose opinions and

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practices were highly extravagant, and even impious. Though his followers never numbered above thirty persons, it was a favorite device of the ruling party to charge their absurdities on the whole body of the Presbyterians, who in fact repudiated their heresies with the utmost horror.

Note 3.

Now get thee to thy praying,
(The bloody Claver'se spake.)

Perhaps there never was another traditionary reputation so black, so well earned, and so thoroughly authenticated in all its leading features, as that borne by John Grahame of Claverhouse—the "bluidie Claver'se" of our shuddering peasantry—the "gallant Dundee" of song, worthy of a better theme—and the forlorn hope for a hero, of certain of our modern Jacobite romancers upon history! Truly they are much to be pitied for the materials they have to work upon! and we might almost compare their self-imposed task, to that of some poor artificer of images in a heathen or popish country, compelled to fashion an idol from a stock, and perpetually interrupted in his attempted sculp-

turing of beauty, by the knots and distortions of an inveterately ungracious crab! All the waters of Helicon would, we suspect, be wasted, in the endeavor to wash the blood-stains from the memory of Grahame of Claverhouse! The most palpable result of the encomiums of his recent admirers having been, to force from the obscurity in which they have for some time been suffered to remain the too convincing proofs of his deficiency, even in those qualities for which he had so long usurped credit—personal courage, and loyalty to his ill-fated and evil-counselled king!

It is a significant fact, and worthy surely of being seriously pondered, that consequent on the resurrection of what call themselves "church principles" in our day, has followed a perfect clamor of eulogy in favor of the "human bloodhounds," who, in the palmy days of the system, sustained it with their swords! Are we to understand from this, that those who consider Sharp as the model for a prelate, and Claverhouse as the glass by which a Christian gentleman should fashion himself, want but the power and opportunity to make approval practical, "by doing likewise?" In our favored generation of "words not deeds," the question may provoke a smile; and yet, perhaps, too few of us realize as we ought to do the extent of our obligation, under God, to those laws of our country, by which the panegyrists of the persecutors have been hitherto restrained within the bounds of a barren admiration. For is not the human heart the same in all ages? And what is

lacking but the sunshine of favorable circumstances, for the little seed of sympathy to spring forth, the full-grown Upas of imitation.

THE MARTYRS OF WIGTON

The Martyrs of Wigton.

"Some think if it were Jesus Christ, and if it were a *fundamental point* they were called to confess, they would stand for it with life and estate; but it is thought that Christians now stand upon some things that are but fancies and nice scrupulosities, and that, if there be any thing in them, it is but a small matter; and shall a man venture his life and all, upon a small thing? Well, if they be none of *Christ's small things*, let them go; but if they be one of his truths, will ye call that a small thing? His small things are very great things."—JOHN LIVINGSTONE.

AY! bonnie hills of Galloway! the clouds above
ye driven,
Make pleasant shadows in your depths, with glints
and gleams of heaven;

And ye have fairy, hidden lakes, deep in your secret breast,
Which shine out suddenly like stars, as the sunbeams go to rest—
And ye have dells, and greenwood nooks, and little valleys still,
Where the wild bee bows the harebell down, beside the mountain rill,
And over all, grey Cairnsmore glooms—a monarch stern and lone,
Though the heather climbs his barrenness, and purples half his throne!

O bonnie hills of Galloway! oft have I stood to see,
At sunset hour, your shadows fall, all darkening on the sea;

While visions of the buried years, came o'er me in their might—
As phantoms of the sepulchre—instinct with inward light!
The years—the years—when Scotland groaned, beneath her tyrant's hand,
And it was not for the heather, she was called "the purple land,"
And it was not for their loveliness, her children blessed their God,
For the secret places of the hills—and the mountain heights untrod.

Oh! as a rock, those memories still breast time's surging flood,
Her more than twice ten torture years, of agony and blood!—

A lurid beacon light they gleam, upon her pathway now,
They sign her with the Saviour's seal—His cross upon her brow!
And never may the land whose flowers, spring fresh from martyr graves,
A moment's parley hold with Rome—her mimics—or her slaves,
A moment palter with the chains, whose scars are on her yet,
Earth must give up the dead again—ere Scotland can forget!—

—A grave—a grave is by the sea—in a place of ancient tombs[1]—
A restless murmuring of waves, for ever o'er it comes—

A pleasant sound in summer tide—a requiem low
and clear,
But oh! when storms are on the hill—it hath a
voice of fear!
So rank and high the tomb weeds wave, around
that humble stone,
Ye scarce may trace the legend rude—with lichen
half o'ergrown—
But ask the seven years' child that sits, beside the
broken wall,
He will not need to spell it o'er—his heart hath
stored it all!

A peasant's tale—a humble grave—two names on
earth unknown,
But Jesus bears them on His heart, before the
eternal throne!

And kings, and heroes, yet shall come, to wish
their lot were bound,
With those poor women slumbering, beneath the
wave girt ground!—
The earth keeps many a memory of blood as water
poured—
The peasant summoned at his toil, to own, and
meet his Lord—
The secret hungering in the hills—where none but
God might see—
Ay! Earth had many martyrs—but these two were
of the sea!

* * * * * * * *

"The redcoats, lass! the redcoats!" cry the weans
from off the street,
Who knows but Claver'se' evil eye, may blast them
if they meet![2]—

Nay! only Bruce and Windram come! but, oh!
wae worth the way—
They have gotten Gilbert Wilson's bairns in their
cruel hands to-day!—
See Annie! bonnie Annie! oh, but she is wasted
sore,
With weary wandering in the hills—this seven
month and more—
And Margaret with her bleeding feet, and weather-
stained brow—
But surely One alone could breathe the calm upon
it now!—

—She recks not of the jibing words, those ruthless
soldiers speak—
She recks not of her bleeding feet—her frame so
worn and weak—

She sees not even the pitying looks that follow as
she goes—
Her soul is filled so full with prayer—that God
alone she knows!
Long hath she looked for such a day—with awe
and shuddering dread,
Its terror in the night hath fallen—haunting her
cavern bed,
And she hath prayed in agony—that if He might
not spare,
Jesus would bear her charges then—and He hath
heard her prayer!

They have brought her to their judgment-hall—a
narrow prison-room,
And once she looked up, as they crossed, from sun-
light into gloom,

And a sound of bitter weeping close beside her now she hears,—
And she wished her hands unshackled, just to dry her mother's tears!
They have questioned of her wanderings—they have mocked her with their words,
They have asked her if the Covenant could shield her from their swords,
Or if she sought a miracle to test her call the more—
That she ventured to her father's home—right past the curate's door!

They questioned her with cruel taunts—and waited for reply—
She met her father's look of woe—her mother's streaming eye—

A moment quivered all her frame—strange gaspings choked her breath;
Then fell the words forth, one by one—as from the lips of death.—
"The blink of our own ingle—it came glancing o'er the tide,
And we were wet and weary both—upon the mountain side—
My very heart grew sick within—my father's face to see,
And Annie yearned to rest her head upon my mother's knee!

"O men! but they are bitter tears—ye cause the houseless weep,
With haunting thoughts of food and fire—that will not let them sleep,—

And temptings of home words and ways—even whispering as they pray,
Until Another takes the load—once tempted even as they!"
There was a murmur through the crowd—first hope, and then despair,
For in the scoffing laugh of Bruce—was that that could not spare—
"O lass! ye should have ta'en the bay—ere there was light to see!"
She answered to that pitying voice—"I dared na for the sea!"

Alas! it is a little stroke draws from the flint the fire—
And but a little spark may light the martyr's funeral pyre—

And in the hearts of evil men such mischiefs smouldering herd,
That cruel thought, to cruel deed, may kindle at a word!
"Ho! ho! the sea! the raging sea! and can it tame your pride?
My sooth! we'll frame a Covenant with the advancing tide—
To-morrow—when the dawn is chill—in Blednoch Bay[3] we'll see,
What mild persuasion harbors in the cold kiss of the sea!"

A man is stricken to the earth—by that strange voice of doom,
The mother pleads not—knows not—all is blackness in the room;

As if smit with sudden blindness—she goes groping from the door,
And they hinder her to follow—who shall see her face no more!
But the father! O the father! 'twas a timid man and weak,
Complying still with every time—he had his faith to seek—
And now, within his heart and brain, a dreadful sound he hears,
A sound of rushing waters—but they find no vent in tears!

God help him! He hath need of prayer—and knows not how to pray,
He gasps out vain appeals to men—who scoff, and turn away;

Madly he grovels in the dust—in desperate anguish now—
Until he feels his Margaret's kiss, like dew upon his brow.
"God help thee, father! O this sight is pitiful to see!
Canst thou not give thy child for Him, who gave His son for thee?
Trust me, dear father, He is near, His promise to fulfil,
In passing through the waters—He will be beside us still!"

* * * * * * * *

—It is the solemn evening hour—the seal of that sad day,
And the rich purple of the hills, is blending all to grey;

And from the cloud thrones of the west, the last
bright gleam hath fled,
And the moon riseth white and wan—as a watcher
o'er the dead!
—Sits Gilbert Wilson by his hearth—one child
beside his knee,
O cheaply ransomed with his all!—a ruined man
is he—
For his poor life—and those poor hoards—the
Cross he dared to shun,
All proffered now for his *two* bairns—and they have
bought him *one!*

He sits beside his blackened hearth—unconscious
of its gloom—
A chill hath gathered at his heart—that mocks at
that cold room—

There is no food upon the board—no kindled rush
to guide,
The gudewife at her nightly task—of spinning by
his side;
And saving, that at times his hand—as if to prove
her there,
Strays in the darkness tremblingly, amid his
Annie's hair—
And saving that the mother's moan, at times will
make him start,
Ye might have deemed, the mighty grief—had
burst the feeble heart!

O! prison bars are stark and strong—to shut out
light and air,
And yet the moonlight's sympathy—it stealeth
even there,

A glory on the dungeon floor—as on the free green sod,
A voiceless messenger of peace—to souls at peace with God!
And Margaret sitteth in its beam—its radiance on her brow,
As though the crown she soon shall wear—were brightening o'er her now,
With folded hands upon her knee—and half suspended breath,
Listing to one who shares her cell—and soon must share her death!

A solemn place—a solemn time—for parted friends to meet,—
Yet in their same extremity—their communing is sweet;

And while in prayer and praise fleet by the watches
of the night,
Faith, like the moonbeam, enters in—and floods
the grave with light!
Oh! youth and age contrasted well—in mutual
help ye blend,
This tells of the unchanging God—*that* of the
Saviour friend,
One tramples life's new springing flowers—for her
Redeemer's sake,
The other stays her age on Him—who never can
forsake!

Long had they loved—as Christians love—those
two—so soon to die,
And each the other greeted first—with weeping—
silently,

The matron wept—that that young life, so timelessly must cease;
The maiden—that that honored head, must not go down in peace—
But soon—oh, soon—it passed away—the coward thought and base,
And each looked humbly—thankfully—into the other's face,
"Mother! He rules the awful sea—with all its waters wild"—
"The many waters are His voice—of love to thee, my child!"

* * * * * * * *

—The guards are met—the stakes are set—deep, deep within the sand,
One far toward the advancing tide—one nearer to the land;

And all along the narrow shore, that girdles in the bay,
Small groups of anxious watchers come—as wane the stars away!
Low lie the fog clouds on the hills—blank in their curtained screen,
Each crest of beauty veils its brow, from that abhorred scene;
While eastward far, the straining eye, through mist and gloom may see,
Large raindrops plashing heavily—into a dull—sad sea!

—They come—they come—a distant sound!—a measured marching, soon
On mail-clad men, the dew-drops rain—from off thy woods Baldoon![4]

The trodden grass—the trampled flowers—alas!
poor emblems they,
Of all a despot's iron heel, was crushing down that
day—
They shall revive! the harebell, see—uprears its
crest again,
The falling dew hath cleansed anew, its purity from
stain,
And thus, beneath the oppressor's tread, and hell's
opposing powers,
God's truth throughout the land shall spring—a
sudden growth of flowers!

Ah! little Margaret's playmates deemed—in child-
hood's frolic glee—
What shadow of a coming hour—still scared her
at the sea—

What secret shiver of the soul, passed to her from the bay—
And made her cast with impulse strong, the sea-weed crown away!
Oft would they seek, with mirthful wile, to lure her to the strand,
Or hide the sea-shell 'mid the flowers, she grasped with eager hand,
But in it still a whisper stirred, that shook her soul with fears,
And much they mocked her weakness then—remembered now with tears!

Sad silence deepened on the throng, as near and nearer came,
The victims to their place of doom—the murderers to their shame—

And there were blank and hopeless looks—white lips dry parched with fear,
Low murmurs—suddenly suppressed—lest they who rule should hear—
And men, bowed down with women's tears—until the sod was wet—
But Bothwell Brig[5] unnerved their arm, and crushed their manhood yet!
Wo for the land! the despot's rule hath lined its soil with graves—
And left beneath the frown of God—but taskmasters and slaves!

Wo for the land! Aye, gaze ye here! ye, who would school the soul,
From its high conscience-post of trust—to bow to your control—

The work is done! the strife is won! the conflict passed away—
Rule o'er these wrecks of human kind!—and triumph if ye may!
High hearts once beat beneath the vest a Scottish peasant wears—
Go! seek them in their martyr graves! for these are not their heirs!
Only a seed the mountains keep, till God's good time shall come—
And the harvest, sown in blood and tears—be brought with shoutings home!

A sound—it cometh from the sea! and many a cheek is pale—
A freshening wind—and fast behind—that hurrying voice of wail—

"Beshrew my heart!"—cries Windram now—
"haste, comrades, while ye may!
With Solway speed—I red ye heed—the tide comes in to-day!
Now, mother, to the stake amain!—your praying time is past—
Or pray the breakers, if ye will—they race not in so fast!"—
Her grey hairs streaming on the wind—they bear her to the bay,
While nearer roars the hungry sea, that ravens for its prey!

And Margaret stands—with cold clasped hands—that bitter sight to see,
And now toward her own death-place they guide her silently;

A sudden impulse swayed the crowd—as those
young limbs were bound—
A moment's movement—stilled as soon—a shiver
through a wound!
And they have left her all alone—with that strong
sea before—
A prayer of faith's extremity faint mingling with
its roar—
And on the eyes that cannot close—those grey
hairs streaming still,
While round about, with hideous rout—the wild
waves work their will!

"Ho! maiden! ho! what see'st thou there!" 'tis
Windram's brutal voice,
"Methinks an earthly portion now were scarce be-
neath thy choice!

Yon sea-birds, screaming in their glee, how low they swoop to-day—
Now tell us, lass! what dainty cheer allures them in the bay?"
A change hath passed on that young brow—a glow—a light from heaven,
Above the sea—the lowering sky—to her seems glory riven—
"It is my Saviour wrestling there—in those poor limbs I see—
He who is strength in death to her—hath strength in death for me!"

And sudden from those parted lips, rich tones of triumph come[6]—
Her fear is past—she stands at last, superior to her doom!

And strains, in midnight watchings learned, on many a blasted heath,
Swell slowly—solemnly, to heaven—the anthem of her death!
Strange sweetness vibrates on the gale—it rises o'er the sea—
As though an angel choir prolonged that thrilling harmony,
And still the song of faith and praise, swells louder, clearer yet,
While to her feet the foam wreathes curl—and the dry sand grows wet!

—A yell! it echoes from the hills! it pealeth to the sky!
Startling wild creatures of the woods with its wild agony—

And bounding on from rock to rock—with gaunt arms tossed to heaven,
And maniac gestures—scaring still—the crowd before him driven—
A haggard man hath gained the bay—with blood-shot eyes and wild,
And cast him down at Windram's feet—and shrieked, "My child! My child!"
Poor Margaret heard—as died her song—in one convulsive gasp—
And the rushing waters bound her in the terror of their clasp!

"My child! my child! she shall not die—I've gold, I've gold," he cried,
"I found one heart that pitied me, though all were stone beside—

Ye said that for a hundred pounds, the oaths ye'd
proffer still—
Spare the young life! she'll take your tests!—I
know, I know she will!"
Dark Windram glanced upon the gold—he glanced
upon the sea—
"Laggard, thou comest late," he said, "she might
have lived for me!"
But two strong swimmers at the word—plunge
headlong in the wave,
They reach the stake—the cords they break!—not,
not too late to save!

And women throng to chafe her hands, and raise
her drooping head,
Dropping warm tears on the cold brow—so calm—
so like the dead—

While that poor father, crouching near—creeps shuddering to her feet,
And steals his hand up to her heart—to count its earliest beat!
Just then—athwart two glooming clouds—the morning sun made way,
Lighting a glory on the wave—a sunbow in the spray—
And up the hills the mist wreaths rolled, revealing half their frame,
And Margaret in the gleam awoke—and breathed her Saviour's name!

Dark Windram turned him on his heel—he paced apart awhile—
"Oh for the heart of Claver'se now—to do this work and smile!

Come, girl, be ruled! thou'st proved enough, methinks, yon bitter brine,
We'll find the partans* fitter food, than these young limbs of thine!
Hold off, and let me near to her! beshrew this snivelling ring—
Ho, lass! stand up upon thy feet, and pray, 'God save the king!'"
"To die unsaved were horrible," she said, with low sad voice,
"Oh yes! God save him if He will! the angels would rejoice!"

Then up he sprang—that trembling man—low cowering at her feet,
"'Tis said—'tis said—my blessed bairn!—those words of life repeat!"

* Crabs.

And Windram signalled with his hand—and rose
a shout on high,
Strange blessing on the tyrant's head!—but ere it
reached the sky,
A miscreant foul hath stopped its course—and
baulked the echoes near—
They could not catch a sound that died—like
curses on the ear!
A spare, mean man, with shuffling gait, hath press-
ed before the rest,
"'Tis well to pray—God save the king—but will
she take the Test?"

And Windram looked into his face—and cursed
his civil sneer—
He knew him for the tool of Grahame—his spy,
and creature there—

A curate's brother[7]—creeping up—in those ill times to place.

Trained in apostasy from God—to all things vile and base!

"Well! well! Sir Provost, work your will, this gear is to your mind,

For me, I'd rather fight with men, than choke this woman kind;

Bid her abjure the Covenant—none better knows the how!—

There's scarce an oath on either side, but you have gulped ere now!"

Smooth, smiling stood the provost forth—no chafing stirred his blood,

Something he muttered of "King James"—"the law"—and "public good,"

And then, as angry brows grew dark, and women muttered loud,
He shrank towards the soldiery, as though he feared the crowd!
"Dear Margaret, baulk this bloodhound yet!—Oh spare thy father's wo!"
She started from their clasping arms—"I may not!—let me go!
I am the child of Christ," she said, "Lord! break this snare for me!"—
And Windram turned his face aside, and pointed to the sea!—

* * * * * * * *

—They will not cease—they will not sleep—those voices of the wave,
For ever—ever whispering, above the martyr's grave;

'Tis heard at night—'tis heard at noon—the same
low wailing song,
In murmur loud—in cadence low—"How long, O
Lord—how long!"
A cry against thee from the tide! O tyrant, banned
of Heaven!
It meets the blood-voice of the earth—and answer
shall be given!
A little while—the cup fills fast—it overflows for
thee—
And thine extremity shall prove the vengeance of
the sea!

Ay! gnash thy teeth in impotence! the fated hour
is come[8]—
And ocean—with her strength of waves—bears the
avenger home;

See! eager thousands throng the shore, to hail the advancing fleet,
While baffled Dartmouth vainly strives—that heaven-sent foe to meet—
And post, on hurrying post crowds fast, with tidings of dismay,
How the glassed waters lull, to aid the landing of Torbay—
Away! prepare thy coward flight—thy sceptre scourge cast down—
The sea pursues thee with its curse—thou king without a crown!

Notes to the Martyrs of Wigton.

Note 1.

A grave! a grave is by the sea—in a place of ancient tombs—
A restless murmuring of waves, for ever o'er it comes.

The small grave-yard that surrounds the old church of Wigton, is a spot as attractive in its situation, as interesting from the associations with which several of its time-worn tombstones are connected. So close to the shore, that the sparkling wavelets on a summer's day seem, from a little distance, to kiss the monuments—there is an incessant and inextricable mingling of wind-voices, and wave-voices with-

in it, suggestive of a thousand dreamy imaginations—a whispering of leaves and blossoms to the waters, and an answering again of waters to the leaves and blossoms, as though youth and life were breathing out their secrets, and receiving in return, the solemn confidence of death!

It was a lovely day in autumn, if our recollection serves us, when we last stood within the precincts of that quiet churchyard. Our quest was for the graves of the martyrs, Margaret Wilson, whose eighteen summers had sufficed for acquiring that best of all wisdom—"the wisdom that cometh from above,"—and her aged companion in the faith and patience of the gospel, Margaret Maclachlan, of whom it is affectingly recorded, "That she was taken off her knees in prayer, and in her own house," to be carried to prison and to death; and for some time we feared our search would be in vain. Having scrambled over a small dyke, from which the stones in many places had fallen partially, we found ourselves in a very wilderness of flowering weeds, and the rankest vegetation, from amongst which the rude grey stones peeped up at intervals—apparently much in need of the timely intervention of some "Old Mortality" to preserve, not only their inscriptions in their integrity, but their very substance from decay. We groped about for awhile in our uncertainty, clearing the tall grasses first from one crumbling monument, then from another, laboriously spelling out superscriptions, which proved to be not what we quested for; and, at length, had almost given up the venture in despair, when, having somehow guessed at our di-

lemma, a tiny sun-burned urchin of a child came suddenly to our relief. Diving through the weeds, which truly reached above his middle, he guided us with unerring certainty to one of the least apparent gravestones, and bending down over it, with a child-like reverence in his features, as he pointed to the scarcely legible inscription, he said, as far as we can remember, "Look! she was but a lassie, yet she dee'd for the Covenant!"

Note 2.

Who knows but Claver'se' evil eye may blast them if they meet!

Much has been said, and something sung, concerning the miserable superstition of the Covenanters, in that they avowed the belief of their cruel persecutor, Claverhouse, being in actual collusion with the enemy of souls; and so, regarding him, and his black charger, as alike invulnerable to ordinary weapons, were guilty, amongst their manifold other absurdities, of loading their muskets occasionally with a "dollar cut into slugs." This was, unquestionably, very foolish, especially, considering how few dollars the

system of fines and exaction so long in active operation against them, must have left amongst the party; and we have no doubt, the many, who take history for granted in the pages of a romance, have gone forth, under the spell of the "great wizard," or the minor mimicry of his small successors, fully satisfied of the grossness of that ignorant credulity, which distinguished the Covenanters of Scotland from all the other men of their day! To such, we would simply recommend a course of reading, which we will warrant as amusing as any the circulating library can supply. We allude to the records of "The Witch Trials of Scotland," from the time when bonnie King Jamie the Solomon of his age, himself delighted to occupy the judgment-seat, and display his superior skill in *witch-finding;* to that, when a later judge had to descend from it, to preserve the life of a miserable old woman, by avowing himself the author, in a boyish frolic, of the memorable charm, by which she had for years been gaining her bread!

We would refer also to the fact quoted in the elder Dr. M'Crie's unequalled "Defence of the Covenanters," (recently republished,) of the whole parliament of Scotland, sitting in grave attention to the depositions, concerning the stream of blood, which "poppled up" from the roots of the tree on which Argyll hanged the caterans. This was in the very lifetime of Claverhouse. Surely it is an unworthy policy, and savors of a cause too tender-eyed to bear the strong daylight of truth, thus to attempt to cast exclusively upon

one party in the struggle, the reproach common alike to both. It is most certain that the age of the Covenanters was an age of many superstitions; but it is equally certain, that the Covenanters were by no means the most superstitious men of their age; on the contrary, their deep insight into the oracles of God, their clear and sound theology, delivered the more educated among them, (a class which included all their ministers,) from very many of the puerilities by which the minds of their opponents were entrammelled; so that, taking even an extreme case on either side, we would point to Archbishop Laud, shaking at an omen, and trembling over a dream, and then to Alexander Peden, blessing his God from out the sudden mist which hid him from his persecutors, "That He had let down a lap of His cloak to screen auld Sandie;" and we would say, "If both were superstitious, which was the healthiest and the holiest superstition?"

Note 3.

To-morrow—when the dawn is chill—in Blednoch
Bay we'll see.

Mr. Macaulay has fallen into a slight geographical error, in supposing the exposure of the martyrs to have taken

place in the Solway. The Bay of Blednoch, or Bladenoch, which was the actual scene of their martyrdom, is a small bay at the extremity of that of Wigton, into which the little river or "water" of Blednoch discharges itself. The surrounding scenery is very fine.

Note 4.

On mail-clad men, the dewdrops rain—from off thy woods Baldoon.

The direct road from Wigton to Blednoch, passes the old Tower of Baldoon—interesting as the scene of the sad catastrophe which suggested the story of the "Bride of Lammermoor," and beautifully situated amidst fine old trees, rooted in one of the most fertile soils, of which Galloway, or even Scotland can boast.

Note 5.

But Bothwell Brig unnerved their arm, and crushed their manhood yet!

The disastrous field of Bothwell, in 1679, extinguished the hopes of the Covenanters; and the cruelties that followed, wellnigh broke the strong heart of Scotland. From that period we may date a gradual sinking in the spirit of the population. A hopelessness and helplessness seized simultaneously upon them; and those who lacked the faith and courage to be martyrs, resigned themselves in desperate apathy to the degradation of slaves. The efforts of the few who yet at intervals resisted, became spasmodic, and characterised by the madness which oppression induces on the wise man; and whilst the salt of the earth was to be found only in its dens and caverns, all the decomposing influences of despotism took effect upon the miserable peasantry who yet clung to their homes. It may be questioned, whether the demoralizing result of the endless multiplication of oaths, tests, and declarations (those cobwebs for consciences) at that sad time, has even yet passed away from the land; and they who have, for a season, the destinies of a kingdom in their grasp, would do well to ponder, ere they break down, for any earthly purpose, those

barriers of self-respect around the inner man, which, to the third and fourth generation, it may be labor in vain to re-erect.

Note 6.

And sudden from those parted lips, rich tones of triumph come.

"When Margaret Wilson was at the stake, she sang the 25th Psalm from verse 7th downwards a good way, and read (repeated) the 8th chapter of the Romans with a great deal of cheerfulness, and then prayed. While at prayer the water covered her."—Wodrow.

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Note 7.

A curate's brother—creeping up—in those ill times to place.

There is scarcely a word with which the popular associations are so different on the opposite banks of the Tweed,

as with this little word "curate." To the English pronouncer it more usually suggests, (and well it may!) a thousand remembrances of apostolic, self-forgetting men, patiently tracing the footsteps of their Divine Master, through evil report, and good report, or harder still to human nature, no report at all; active in every lowly department of parish usefulness, preaching the gospel to the poor, visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping themselves unspotted, alike from the world secular, and the world ecclesiastical. Against such, it would indeed be most painful to us to be supposed capable of hinting a disparagement. But in connection with the history of Scotland—in the reigns of the last Stuarts—the word is suggestive of far different associations; and we may cite Bishop Burnet in the "History of his own Times," as a certainly not too willing witness against the character of the curates who then swarmed over Galloway and the adjoining counties, filling the vacant places of those men of God, who had, in mockery of the most solemn engagements, been violently thrust out of their pulpits, under the drunken administration of Middleton; some to seek shelter and hospitality in other countries, many to seal their testimony with their blood at home. Says the bishop, "There was a sort of an invitation sent over the kingdom, like a hue and cry, to all persons to accept of benefices in the West. The livings were generally well endowed, and the parsonage houses were well built, and in good repair; and this drew many very worthless persons thither, who had little learn-

ing, less piety, and no sort of discretion. They came thither with great prejudices against them, and had many difficulties to wrestle with." Then follows an account, amusing from its inconsistency, of the "old incumbents" and their teaching, in which the worthy bishop makes ample display of his own prejudices; but from which, as he observes, "the judicious reader will make good inferences," and find no difficulty in extracting either the real character of the men, or the secret of that attachment of their flocks, which deepened into tenfold intensity, the aversion and disgust with which they repudiated the miserable hirelings who attempted to intrude themselves into their work. By and by our author goes on, "What they (the people) heard concerning Sharp's betraying those that had employed him, and the other bishops, who had taken the Covenant, and had forced it on others, and now preached against it, openly owning that they had in so doing gone against the express dictate of their own conscience, did very much heighten all their prejudices, and fixed them so in them, that it was scarce possible to conquer them afterwards. All this was out of measure increased by the new incumbents, who were put in the places of the ejected preachers, and were generally very mean and despicable in all respects. They were the worst preachers I ever heard. They were ignorant to a reproach; and many of them were openly vicious. They were a disgrace to their orders, and the sacred functions; and were, indeed, the dreg and refuse of the northern parts. Those of them who rose above con-

tempt or scandal, were men of such violent tempers, that they were as much hated as the others were despised. This was the fatal beginning of restoring Episcopacy in Scotland." Fatal, indeed! and when we have added to this dark picture, the single feature yet wanting to its hideousness, that these hireling curates set themselves forward with busy eagerness as the spies of the rapacious soldiery, seeking out for them the hiding places of those "who embraced the rock" as a shelter from their tyranny; supplying them with the names of all who refused to attend upon their ministrations, that their persons might be tortured, and their homes made desolate; and, with all the ingenuity of evil, hounding on these human wolves upon what in bitter mockery they called their flocks—can we wonder at the contemptuous aversion with which their very name was regarded, or that, after the lapse of almost two centuries, it remains in Scotland a hissing and a reproach!

The Grahame referred to at this stage of the poem, is not Claverhouse himself, but his like-minded brother, Colonel David Grahame, who acted as his depute in the sheriffship of Wigtonshire, after Sir Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw had been deprived of his hereditary jurisdiction in his favor; Sir Andrew choosing "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God," than to hold office under their persecutors. It was by this Colonel David Grahame, in conjunction with the notorious Grierson of Lagg, and Major Windram, that the doom of the martyrs had been pronounced.

There is a wild legend yet current in Wigtonshire, that when Margaret Wilson was thrust back into the water, the miserable provost who had prevented the reversal of her sentence, called out with scoffing exultation, "Hech! my hearty! tak' anither drink!" He returned to his home; claimed, no doubt, good service-money from Grahame; and, for a time, as such creatures do, went on and prospered, only, he found himself distempered by a most perplexing thirst. Early and late, at home and abroad—pompous in the administration of his office, or tame in the seclusion of his fireside, water—water—water became increasingly his necessity—another and another drink, his appallingly suggestive cry! Physicians were resorted to in vain; medicaments were swallowed without effect; the mysterious disease crept on, resistless by any human agency, and began to evidence by outward manifestations, the extremity of its consuming violence within. For years, it is said, after the Revolution the miserable spectacle of the then ex-provost of Wigton, might be seen, creeping daily along the by-ways of the little town, with ghastly visage, and with wasted limbs, shrinking from the observation he excited, and often turning back to scatter with his maledictions the band of urchins who gathered after him with shouts, yet unable to refrain, even in the open streets, and beneath the pointing finger, from snatching "another and another drink" at the hands of the servant lass, who followed him like his shadow, bending beneath the weight of

an enormous water-can! And of this unquenchable thirsting, at last, the persecutor died!

Note 8.

Ay! gnash thy teeth in impotence! the fated hour is come.

It is unnecessary almost to refer to Mr. Macaulay's History, for the detail of all the truly memorable circumstances attendant on the landing of the Prince of Orange in Torbay; only, the writer would wish to accept to the full, a share (if well deserved) in the imputation of superstitious weakness, therein hinted against such as delight to consider those circumstances providential, and to render all the praise and glory of our great national deliverance to Him, whom winds and waves obey, who maketh inquisition for blood, and who is verily the God that judgeth in the earth!

THE LAST WORDS OF HUGH MACKAIL.

M'KAIL'S EXECUTION. p 449.

The Last Words of Hugh Mackail.

"And now I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off."—HUGH MACKAIL.

THIS young minister suffered martyrdom in Edinburgh, December 22, 1666, at the early age of twenty-six, after being horribly tortured with *the boot*. His ostensible crime was having been concerned in the rising at Pentland; his real one, having preached a sermon on his first entrance into the ministry, which exposed him to the personal enmity of Sharp. "His appearance on the scaffold," says Kirkton, "excited such a lamentation as was never known in Scotland before; not one dry cheek upon all the street, or in all the numberless windows in the market place."

FAREWELL! thou earth, and all delights—
Farewell! thou moon and sun—
Farewell! clear days and starlit nights—
The pilgrim's rest is won!

Farewell! my earthly father's love!
Farewell! my mother's kiss!
Faint shadows from my home above—
True foretastes of my bliss!

Farewell! light Cross of God's own Son!
Farewell! reproach and shame!
Farewell! dear work for Jesus done—
Sweet suffering for His name!

Farewell! the courts of God below—
All rich refreshments there!
I take my leave of sin and wo,
And I have done with prayer!

Now welcome! O my Father—God!
My Brother! Saviour! King!
Welcome! thrice precious staff and rod—
Thrice goodly—robe and ring!

Welcome! O Holy Ghost—Thy breath,
In rich effusion given!
Welcome! the bitter sweet of death—
And welcome! opening Heaven!

THE MERRIE TRAGEDIE

OF

THE YONGE SANCT GEIL.

The Merrie Tragedie of the Ponge Sanct Eeil!

September 1, 1558.

"Such ane sudden fray came never amongis the generation of Antichrist within this realme befoir."—JOHN KNOX's *Historie.*

ST. GYLES was the patron Saint of Edinburgh; and his Church (still the High Church of the city) is the earliest parish Church of which record remains within its bounds. How an Athenian noble, migrating at the close of the seventh century to France, to enjoy, amid the wild solitudes of the Rhone, the quiet and retirement, of which the fame of his sanctity and learning deprived him at home, became the patron saint of our far northern metropolis, it is impossible at this distance of time to tell. The fact is all that has come down to us; and the Saint, having been held in marvellous estimation, his effigy not only adorned the city arms, but many offerings of price were made at

his shrine. Of these a curious inventory exists, they having been ruthlessly exposed to sale by the Magistrates of Edinburgh subsequent to the Reformation. About the year 1454, the greatest treasure of all was presented, being no less a relic than "the armbane" of the Saint, procured we are told by William Preston of Gorton, after long entreaty and at considerable expense, through the kindly intervention of the King of France. In token of gratitude for so inestimable a gift, the descendants of that gentleman were entitled to carry the relic (enclosed in a silver case, and wearing a splendid ring on its ghastly finger) in the annual procession in honor of the Saint, which took place on the 1st of September, St. Gyles' day in the calendar. But the light for which Patrick Hamilton prayed amid the fires, had arisen upon his country. The cruel death of George Wishart in 1546, and more recently of old Walter Mill, the last direct victim of the Papacy in Scotland, had stimulated inquiry, and aroused indignation to the highest pitch. And though John Knox had been for a season removed, after the surrender of St. Andrews to the French in 1547, his friend and subsequent coadjutor, John Willock, was so indefatigable in his evangelical work, that "albeit," we are told, "he contracted a dangerous sickness, yet he ceased not from labors, but taught and exhorted *from his bed*." Some of the nobility, with many barons and gentlemen, were his auditors, and by him "were godly instructed and wondrouslie comforted." Under these circumstances, when St. Gyles' day drew near, in the year 1558, the Queen

Regent, Mary of Guise, and her Popish councillors, were not a little concerned to secure its observance with all due, and even more than customary, solemnity; hoping, perhaps, that the show and splendor would be of some avail in winning back, at least the multitude, to the ancient faith. To do the day all possible honor, therefore, the Queen herself, with a gorgeous train of nobles and dignified ecclesiastics, came to town, to walk in the procession behind the effigy of the Saint—but alas! the goodly Sanct Geil (a wooden image of gigantic proportions, for whose yearly painting and adorning some curious items of city expenditure remain) had met the fate recorded in the poem, and a lesser image having been borrowed from the Grey Friars for the occasion, the event turned out, not to the honor, but to the dishonor of the Saint; and, we believe, the procession in question was the last of the kind in Scotland, till in our own day—the enlightened nineteenth century—the Holy Guild, or Brotherhood of St. Joseph, began its rambles in and about Edinburgh!

—Up! up! and featly deck the shrines,
And busk the tapestrie;—
The Queen with dawning light she comes—
A worthy Regent she!

Let heretics both rave and roup,*
Let bedfast Willock pray;—
A goodlie gathering we'll have,
Upon St. Geiles—his day!

Here comes Carmichael with his keys[1]—
"My joys! what cheer, I trow?
Why fled so fast the cowls I met,
By the Nor' Loch—but now?"

"Haste! haste! where snores the Sacristan?
Go—clamor here the loun!—
The Saint must don his finger ring—
Our Ladye her best gown!"—

"Make candlestick and chalice bright—
(The pix is rusty grown!)—
Reach hither the comb of St. Peter's cock[2]—
It lies by Sanct Geiles' armbone!"—

* "Rouping like ravens."—JOHN KNOX.

"St. Ninian's nails—St. Andrew's teeth—
A joint of St. David's toe—
What marvels they wrought, when 'Believe or burn,'
Was the watchword late ago!

"Now well-a-day! the old faith's away—
Not a bodle to bless us whiles!
The very auld wives spell the Bible book—
But—St. Mary!—whare's Sanct Geiles?"—

Down dashed the light from his trembling hand—
All started to the spot!—
And the moon showed—cold and carelessly—
The place where the Saint *was not!*

"Now a malison wither each counterfeit father,
I met by the Nor' Loch but now!—
When their errand I speired—the false Huguenots jeered,
'And said they but paid a vow!"

Black gloomed the Bailie—black scowled the Prior—
Cried the Sacristan—like to faint,—
"Disciples of him—made our Ladye swim[3]—
What reck they of drowning a Saint!"

"Ah well-a-day! the old faith's away!"
Still the Sacristan harped on his string;
Adding in with a sigh—half of grief, half of joy—
"They have left us his finger ring!"

—Now out and spake a wise young Friar—
"Good Fathers—what means this rout?
Though the Saint have been sunk in the harbor of Leith,
What hinders him to come out?"—

"If all tales be true—we have heard from you—
More wondrous things may chance!
Think of blessed St. Denys who carried his head,
In the sight of the faithful of France!

"And though our Sanct Geil be of goodlie weight,
The angels may hasten him home ;—
Like the holy houses they carried about,[4]
And the holy stairs—to Rome!

"What heretic hearts might the sight convert,
It could never be needed more!
Not to whisper the wavering faith of some,
Who might meet him at the door!"

The young brother turned on his heel and laughed—
There were others that laughed as well—
Quoth the Prior—with a grim, blood-hungered look—
He hath drunk of St. Leonard's well!"[5]

—The night wears late in a hot debate—
But, spite of all scheming and wishes,
The meikle Sanct Geil must abide for awhile—
Like St. Anthony—preaching to fishes!

—Carmichael is boune to the Grey Friars' now—
Broad pieces to back his petition!—
And the little stars twinkle, and wink from the sky,
As if with a hint of his mission!

"Gie your Sanct Geil—for our Sanct Geil—
And tak the gowd in fee;
A large propine for a sma'—sma' Sanct,
But a Sanct behoves there be!"—

—Now morning light comes slowly up—
An autumn morning clear—
And goodly fair the city shows,
In the waning of the year!

There are hangings rich from balconies,
Devices quaint and gay;
And many a broidered banner flung,
Upon the wind that day!

And there are crosses in the street,
  New planted every where:
And garlands hung from house to house,
  With streamers flaunting fair!

And gallant youths, all gaily dight,
  Are riding through the town;
And maidens fair, from casements high,
  All gaily dight look down!

And nobles proud—and shavelings base—
  In mixed array are seen;
All thronging forth in festive guise,
  To meet the Regent Queen!

In sooth it is a goodly sight,—
  As she comes stately down;
With sunshine on the pageant fair—
  But her forehead wears a frown!

For one hath met her at the Port—
  A hasty word to speak ;—
And the Guisian blood that instant burned,
  Like a death fire in her cheek !

But stately onward paced she still,
  Even to St. Geiles—his Church ;
(There were belted Earls who left her train,
  As it went through the porch !)

—The bells are rung—the mass is sung—
  And pouring from the aisles,
Come priest and prior—monk, frere, and choir,
  They are bringing out St. Geiles !

And lo ! the torches in the sun—
  They darkly smoke and flare—
Some think they show like Papist dreams,
  In the Gospel sunshine fair !

And white-robed boys—fling incense clouds,
As they go down the street;—
There are that whisper, "Bonnie bairns,
Christ's name is far more sweet!"

And silver crosses glancing shine,
And trumpet blasts are blown—
And proudly Preston paces on—
He bears St. Geils' armbone!

And now—and now—whilst nobles bow—
And mitres proud are seen;
The Saint is borne in triumph forth,
Behind him comes the Queen!

There were who bent them down to pray—
(Some wept for shame the while);
But the gazing crowd—they shouted loud,
"They have gotten a young Sanct Geil!"

Eyes flashing fire—cheek white with ire—
Stern paused that angry Queen;
But she only met a mocking laugh—
And her French guards came between!

So on the long procession passed,
Through streets both broad and narrow—
To make the little Saint look big,
They raised him on a barrow!

And in and out—and west about,[6]
Still swept the pageant fine,
Till up the High Street it returned,
And the Queen she passed to dine!

Now angry men—with glances stern,
Began to gather near;
And words were bandied in the crowd—
Ill cared the priests to hear!

"And ha! Sanct Geil!—and ho! Sanct Geil!
Thou art waxen unco wee!
Was thy father feared to face the sun,—
That he hath sent us thee?"

"And hech! to see the wee wee Sanct,
In the muckle auld Sanct's shoon!—
Gude sirs! when idols dwindle sma',
They're gaun to vanish soon!"

And auld wives raised their distaffs high,
And clamored in the crowd;
And some banned here—and some blessed there,
Till the strife swelled fierce and loud!

"Eyes hast thou gotten—thou young St. Geil,
But I trow thou canst not see—
A wide, wide mouth—but the priests, I wot,
Do not leave the meat for thee!"

"If thy ears can hear—thou mayst bend them now
To the doom that speaks thee dead"—
With that was a sudden rush on the Saint—
And the priests that bare him fled!

Then out there pealed a stern, clear voice—
It seemed from every where;—
"Though Jezebel honored the priests of Baal,
For that—did Elijah spare?"

And oh! the clamor—and oh! the roar—
As the strife of an angry sea—
The Queen from table she started up,
Ill cheer that day made she!

Now Dagon lieth without his head—
His limbs in pieces small—
Strange panic seized on all his train,
When they saw their idol fall!

And down the silver crosses went—
  In shreds the banners flew—
And goodlie garments of Babylon,
  Were rent and tattered too!

St. Andrew's teeth—they bit the dust—
  Alas! for St. David's toe!
And Preston threw from him St. Geiles' armbone,
  As far as it would go!

Since our gude town was first a town,
  There never was seen the like;—
There were Papist nobles that drew their swords,
  But they knew not where to strike!

So some fled east—and some fled west—
  As the day it darkened down—
There was one who borrowed an auld wife's mutch,
  To cover a shaven crown!

And some fled south—and some fled north—
As it were for limb and life—
And some have crossed the Queensferrie,
And hidden themselves in Fife!

And from that day—unto this day,
The like hath never come;
The priests grew wary from that hour,
And kept their saints at home!

But the broken Sanct would never mend—
And there chanced a woful thing—
For even Carmichael gave his voice,
To sell his finger ring!

They tore him from the city arms—
They buried his armbone;
His name sounds strangely in the Kirk,
That once was all his own!

And there may gospel preachers stand—
  Nor popish taint defile;
And may all Papist idols meet—
  The fate of the young Sanct Geil!

Notes to the Ponge Sanct Geil.

Note 1.

Here comes Carmichael with his keys.

James Carmichael was for many years one of the Magistrates of Edinburgh. He filled the office of Dean of Guild from October 1552–53. Again from 1555–6; and from 1557–59. In his official capacity he had the charge of the "Kirkwerk," that is, of looking after the preservation of St. Giles's Church, and taking charge of the jewels, the gold and silver candlesticks, eucharists, chalices, and other precious things, belonging to that Church; but these were all ruthlessly disposed of, by order of the Council (including the *armbane* of Sanct Geill, or rather the ring with "ane

dyamant stane, quhilk was on the fingar of the forsaid arme of Sanct Geill,") in October 1560.—Vide Note to p. 259, vol. i., *Edition of the Works of* JOHN KNOX, *by the Wodrow Society.*

NOTE 2.

Reach hither the comb of St. Peter's cock—
It lies by Sanct Geiles' armbone !—

This is, of course, not presented as an authentic catalogue of the *actual* relics of which the Reformation deprived the Church of St. Gyles—the "armbane" being the only one, as far as we are aware, of which the tradition has come down to us; but we appeal to all who have travelled on the Continent (and few in our day have not), whether the list be even a caricature of those belonging to almost every Popish Church of note. We would especially recall to the recollection of our readers, the greater and lesser relics at Aix-la-Chapelle, those at Cologne, Trêves with its Holy Coat, Monza, and last, not least, those of St. John de Lateran at Rome, with the table on which the *Last Supper* is said to have been prepared! Are we to smile or shudder at such things?

Note 3.

Disciples of him—made our Ladye swim—
What reck they of drowning a Saint!

John Knox relates in his history a humorous incident "which took place during his confinement on board the French galleys after the capitulation of St. Andrews in 1547."—"One day a fine painted image of the Virgin was brought into one of the galleys, and a Scottish prisoner was desired to give it the kiss of adoration. He refused, saying, 'That such idols were accursed, and he would not touch it.' 'But you shall,' replied one of the officers roughly, at the same time forcing it towards his mouth. Upon this the prisoner seized the image, and throwing it into the river, said, 'Let our Ladie now save herself; sche is lycht enoughe, lat hir leirne to swyme.' The officers with difficulty saved their goddess from the waves; and the prisoners were relieved for the future from such troublesome importunities." Dr. M'Crie, from whose "Life of Knox" this quotation is made, observes, that though the Reformer has not said so, it is highly probable he himself was the person concerned in the affair. In the poem, this is assumed to have been actually the case.

Note 4.

Like the holy houses they carried about,
And the holy stairs—to Rome!

The peregrinations of the Santa Casa of Loretto are too well known to require recapitulation here; and those who have watched the miserable devotees, crawling up the Santa Scala at Rome, for the sake of the indulgences promised to wasted time and macerated knees, may well be excused for hesitating whether to ascribe its transportation from Pilate's house to the angels of light, or of darkness! We have heard much of late of the high-toned devotion—the intellectual cultivation of the Romish *priesthood*—and when we venture to refer to instances like these in question, of the gross superstition and mental prostration of the great mass of the *Romish laity*, we are met by the fashionable outcry against Protestant illiberality, and charged with unfairness in aspersing a *system*, with the ignorances and imbecilities of its uneducated votaries. But, we answer, Are these errors—these imbecilities—*disavowed* by the authorized standards, or the authorized teachers of the Church of Rome? Are they not, on the contrary, very parts and parcels of Romanism itself—portions so essential to the edifice, that, if taken away, the whole fabric must totter to

dissolution? And if so, What resemblance can such a structure bear to the "holy and beautiful house"—the "living temple"—built with "lively stones," having the Son of God alike for its foundation and its chief corner-stone—of which the temple of Jerusalem was but a type—and wherein only, the Spirit of God has promised to dwell? That can be no Church of Christ, which has myths and mysteries for the initiated, and but the grossness of superstition for the mass of the people; for "to the poor" especially, *the Gospel* is preached. Jesus, who came "*a light* into the world," rejoiced in spirit, that "what was *hid* from the wise and prudent, was revealed unto babes." And when Scribes and Pharisees took counsel to slay Him, we are told that "the *common* people heard Him gladly." Where Christ's Church *is*, there must be *light*, not darkness, for the poor. "The entrance of Thy words *giveth light; it giveth understanding* to *the simple*."—(Ps. cxix. 130.) "And Thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness *for the poor!*"—(Ps. lxviii. 10.)

Note 5.

He hath drunk of St. Leonard's well!

Gavin Logie, Principal of St. Leonard's College, St. Andrews, was so successful in instilling the Reformed opinions

into the minds of his students, that it became proverbial to say of any one who was suspected of Lutheranism, "He hath drunk of St. Leonard's well!"

Note 6.

And in and out—and west about,
Still swept the pageant fine.

"West about goes it, and cumis doun the Hie Street, and doun to the Canno Croce. The Quein Regent dyned that day in Sandie Carpetyne's housse, betuix the Bowes, and so when the idole returned back agane, sche left it, and past in to hir dennar."—Knox's *Historie.*

CAMERONIAN DREAM.

Cameronian Dream.

The following beautiful tributary verses to the memory of those who fell at Airsmoss, were written by James Hislop, a native of the district where the skirmish took place. He composed them when only a shepherd boy, and when he had enjoyed few opportunities of improving his mind. They have frequently been reprinted, but seldom correctly. The following version is copied from the Scots Magazine for February 1821:—

In a dream of the night I was wafted away,
To the moorland of mist where the martyrs lay;
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,
Engraved on the stane where the heather grows green

'Twas a dream of those ages of darkness and
blood,
When the minister's hame was the mountain and
wood;
When in Wellwood's dark moorlands the standard
of Zion,
All bloody and torn, 'mang the heather was lying.

It was morning, and summer's young sun, from the
east,
Lay in loving repose on the green mountain's
breast,
On Wardlaw, and Cairn-Table, the clear shining
dew,
Glistened sheen 'mang the heath-bells and moun-
tain flowers blue.

And far up in heaven in the white sunny cloud,
The sang of the lark was melodious and loud,
And in Glenmuir's wild solitudes, lengthened and deep,
Was the whistling of plovers and the bleating of sheep.

And Wellwood's sweet valley breathed music and gladness,
The fresh meadow blooms hung in beauty and redness,
Its daughters were happy to hail the returning,
And drink the delights of green July's bright morning.

But ah! there were hearts cherished far other feelings,
Illumed by the light of prophetic revealings,

Who drank from this scenery of beauty but sorrow,
For they knew that their blood would bedew it
to-morrow.

'Twas the few faithful ones who, with Cameron,
were lying
Concealed 'mang the mist, where the heath-fowl
was crying;
For the horsemen of Earlshall around them were
hovering,
And their bridle-reins rung though the thin misty
covering.

Their faces grew pale, and their swords were un-
sheathed,
But the vengeance that darkened their brows was
unbreathed;

With eyes raised to Heaven, in meek resignation,
They sung their last song to the God of Salvation.

The hills with the deep mournful music were ringing,
The curlew and plover in concert were singing;
But the melody died 'midst derision and laughter,
As the hosts of ungodly rushed on to the slaughter.

Though in mist and in darkness and fire they were shrouded,
Yet the souls of the righteous stood calm and unclouded;
Their dark eyes flashed lightning, as, proud and unbending,
They stood like the rock which the thunder is rending.

The muskets were flashing, the blue swords were gleaming,
The helmets were cleft, and the red blood was streaming.
The heavens grew dark, and the thunder was rolling,
When in Wellwood's dark moorlands the mighty were falling.

When the righteous had fallen, and the combat had ended,
A chariot of fire through the dark cloud descended,
The drivers were angels on horses of whiteness,
And its burning wheels turned upon axles of brightness.

A seraph unfolded its doors bright and shining,
All dazzling like gold of the seventh refining,

And the souls that came forth out of great tribulation,
Have mounted the chariot and steeds of salvation.

On the arch of the rainbow the chariot is gliding,
Through the paths of the thunder the horsemen are riding.
Glide swiftly, bright spirits, the prize is before ye,
A crown never fading, a kingdom of glory!

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